

THE DIAL

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TOLSTOY

BY THOMAS MANN

Translated From the German by Hildegard Nagel

HE had the stature of the nineteenth century, this giant, who bore epic burdens, under which our quick-breathing and more fragile generation would sink. How great was this period, in all its sombreness, its materialism, its scientific inflexibility and asceticism; how great was that race of writers to which Tolstoy belonged, whose creations dominate the five decades before 1900. Does any cosmic insight that we may have, or are beginning to have, does our yet timid dream of a gladder and more confident humanity, justify us in underestimating, as is now our habit, that earlier time; since after all it would be difficult to deny that from the moral stand-point we have fallen far below its level? In striking contrast with it, our detachment and complacent under-valuing of thought and human dignity would not have been tolerated by the "fatalistic" nineteenth century; and while the war was raging, I often reflected that it would not have had the temerity to break out if in 1914 the sharp penetrating grey eyes of the old man of Yasnaya Polyana had still been upon us. A childish thought, perhaps. At any rate, history had ordained it; he was gone and left no one like him. The reins of Europe fell slack with no hand to guide them, and are without one to-day.

Tolstoy has said of Childhood and Adolescence, one of his early works: "Without false modesty . . . , it is something like the Iliad." It was literally true and only in a superficial way is

the assertion yet more applicable to the giant-work of his maturity, *War and Peace*. The Homeric, the typically-epic, was perhaps more marked in Tolstoy than in any other man of genius. In his work is the heaving might and rhythmic uniformity of the sea, its pristine vigour, its native pungency, imperishable health, and deathless realism. For surely it is permissible to see and feel these things as one, health and realism—the world of plastic form, of instinct, of high kinship with nature on the one hand, contrasting with, as I once tried to suggest in a more comprehensive way, the world of hyper-susceptibility and mental aristocracy, Schiller's world of the ideal, Dostoevsky's apocalyptic world of shadows. Goethe and Tolstoy—when their names were first linked together in criticism, surprise and doubt were aroused; but recent psychological studies have enabled us to take such comparisons for granted. To elaborate the parallel beyond the generically-typical would be pedantic caprice. We need not dwell upon the too obvious and predetermined differences of mind, country, or period. As soon as we advert to culture—that formula which implies nature's groping after mind and the inevitable impulse of mind towards nature—we must abandon the too facile analogy. We ought to be honest enough to admit that to those who possess Goethe, Tolstoy's absurd, naïvely tragic reaching after culture must present the spectacle at once pathetic and sublime, of a child-like barbarian's noble but futile striving towards what is true and human.

Nevertheless, this very Titanic helplessness, recalling the swollen, straining muscles of one of Michael Angelo's tortured creations, lends tremendous moral force to him as an artist. As a story-teller he is without equal; his art, even when he no longer had use for it, except as a means of furthering a dubious and depressing kind of moralizing, affords to any receptive talent (there can be no other) unflinching strength, refreshment, and elemental joy. Not at all with a view to imitating, for who could imitate? He has no following which could accurately be termed a school. Tolstoy's influence, indeed, whether on the spirit or form of a work, makes itself felt in very different ways, and above all, in writings quite unrelated to his own. But even as he, an Antaeus, received fresh creative strength from each contact with earth, so

the world of his mighty art is to us, earth and nature—a reincarnation of itself. To reread him, to let that preternaturally sharp gaze of the lower animals cast its spell on us, the force of his imagery, and limpid clarity of style untinctured with mysticism, again so reminiscent of Goethe, is to find release from every phase of artificiality and useless frivolity, a return to what in each of us is fundamentally wholesome.

Merezhkovski has called him the great prophet of the body, in contrast with Dostoevsky, the prophet of the mind. In fact, the soundness of Tolstoy's art consists in its corporeality. Where we have psychology, we have also pathology. Disease derives from the mind, health from the body. Dostoevsky has given us an analysis of Anna Karenina, full of insight and love, reminding us of Schiller's affectionate eulogy of Wilhelm Meister; but Tolstoy was naturally without comprehension of Dostoevsky. For a moment, at the time of Dostoevsky's death, Tolstoy imagined that "he had been very fond of this man," but he had never previously troubled himself about the author of the *Brothers Karamazoff* and remarks dropped in conversation might have been made by a dunce. "The man was sick himself," he said, "and made all things appear sick." Supposing this to be true, it is an unprofitable truth, as though it should be said of Nietzsche "No, no, from the sick can come only sickness"; which would be not only unworthy but the reverse of the truth. Tolstoy's judgements were those of a great man, arbitrary, objective, and uncompromisingly literal. One need not go back to his unfavourable comparison of Shakespeare, as immoral, with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. But has he dealt more "justly" with his own work? Certainly not when he discarded his Titanic masterpieces as irrelevant and harmful beguilements. Earlier, indeed, while writing *Anna Karenina*, that very greatest novel of society, he threw the manuscript aside as rubbish, again and again; and had no higher regard for it later. This is hardly to be looked upon as mere morbid self-depreciation. He would not have tolerated such criticism from another. His standard of measurement was one he had found in himself. And such impatient disparagement of his own work is contradictorily an artist's acknowledgement of a self transcending his work. It may be a case of having to be more than

the thing one creates; of greatness having its origin in something still greater. Apocalyptic wonders such as Leonardo, Goethe, Tolstoy, support the supposition. But why had Tolstoy never the apologetic attitude to his prophesyings and sectarian doctrine, his ideas of moral improvement, that he has shown towards his artistic creations? Why has he never once held them up to ridicule? One is justified perhaps in this inference: since he is greater than his art, he would, naturally, be greater than his ideas.

Ah, yes—Tolstoy's opinions! Regarded as revelations, for that was their true character, autocratic pronouncements of what we call "personality" receiving authority from the workings of that natural magic which turned the manor-house in the Province of Tula into a shrine for distressed humanity, a world-centre radiating vitality and healing. Vitality and greatness, greatness and power, in what degree are they synonymous? It is the problem of the "great man"; we have groped for its solution throughout the ages and find it in the Chinese theory of practical democracy—in the proverb which so offends our ears: A great man is a public misfortune. European instinct has been and now is for an aesthetic justification of the phenomenon. However, in matters of leadership, education, and progress, there remains, to put it mildly, a doubt, whether the function or even the existence of a great man may, without straining the truth, be so much as brought into relation with these things, whether he may not be purely incidental, an explosion of force without moral significance; touching in his effort to give himself a moral interpretation—that effort made by the prophet of *Yasnaya Polyana* with such praiseworthy ineptitude, embarrassed as he was by the absurdity of his disciples How blessed that life! Blessed in every phase of its tragedy and devout tragi-comedy as power rather than thought; for even the moral sensibility and aspiration of this portentous life teem with expressions of physical exuberance. The incentive? Horror of death in an organism whose thinking was only another manifestation of its immense vitality. We should be frank, without fear of belittling what is great. Even at the last, that famous withdrawal of the saint from home and household signifies as much at least as the social and religious impulse toward salvation, the instinctive flight of a dying animal.

But why should the so beautiful solemn words of Goethe haunt me—

*"Denkt er immer sich ins Rechte?
Ist er ewig schön und gross?"*

What modesty, what moral contagion lie in the endeavour to subdue inherent creative power—under no exterior compulsion—to "the search of truth alone" and to dedicate one's vital momentum to the service of humanity and the spirit! Though Tolstoy's genius may have miscarried a hundred times and his thought stumbled into childish, benighted, unbecoming digressions, his laborious anguish will always be "beautiful and great." It had its source in the perception of a very profound truth. Tolstoy realized that a new era was at hand, an age which would not be satisfied with an art serving merely to enhance life, but which would put socially significant virtues—leadership, decisiveness, and clear thought—above individual genius; and value morality and intelligence more than irresponsible beauty; and he never sinned against his innate greatness, never claimed a "great man's" licence to work confusion, atavism, and evil, but to the best of his understanding, in complete humility, laboured for that which is divinely reasonable.

I seem to be presenting him as a pattern. We are a little, at all events a circumscribed, Central European race compared with his, we writers of to-day.

Nothing can absolve us, and least of all fear of ridicule, or the reproaches and contempt of fools, should we fail to accept the challenge of our time and of our conscience, each among his own people, sincerely to "search out truth alone."

FOUR POEMS

BY LOUIS ZUKOFSKY

I

tam cari capitis

Unlovely you called yourself
And at once I felt I was never lovely:
I, who had few truths to go to,
Found you doubting what I loved.

Now I make you lovely my own way,
Unmentioned were we certain
Of a greater, in small assurances
Others may find trivial!

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II

SONG THEME

to the last movement of Beethoven's Quartet in
C-sharp Minor

All my days—
And all my ways—
Met by hands—
And ringed with feet—
Into laurel-branch the hands
Are gone, into fertile soil the feet;

So these praised ones that are fallen off
Are a signal in the trees,
Are a beacon in the sun,—

Sun and death and stir, and death's unlit love,—
All their days,
And all their ways.

III

Someone said, 'earth, bowed with her death, we mourn
Ourselves, our own earth selves,'—yet for me crept
Rattling a small wind bitter, and I wept
But your own little form that might be torn.
And suddenly I could see your face borne
Like the moon on my sight, it had not slept
But looked, as once, at rest though waking, stepped
To the grave peace of death and not yet worn.

'Look at the moon,' you said: 'Those are no tears
Falling, unclasped through space, for what appears
Dead crater sheds no tears.' And your face from
Where it came vanished, so I was too soon
Oblivious among the wind, the moon
Clouding then, her high dissolution come.

IV

The silence of the good that you were wrought of,
Do I find it transformed by some strange leaven
From you to earth only my earth knows aught of,
And know it silent mound outlined on heaven,
Till all the life of you in our still room
Returns to me—your presence past the wall
Of death, the confines of your dark? So fall
Death's guerdon to me neither sun nor gloom;

But quiet—your silence, when you would stir
With me—its being, what you are and were.
It cannot change though it must change the mode—
Not with you living, but with you dead to darkle—
Yet is no less obliged thus to corrode
In earth with you—earth, shadow of your sparkle.

MR COSTYVE DUDITCH

BY JEAN TOOMER

IT was a helter-skelter early-spring day in Chicago. Draughts of wind swept through the huge corridor formed by the tall buildings which flanked Michigan Boulevard; and where the bridge crossed the Chicago River, air currents from the lake blew in, met with opposing gusts, and set up odd swirls which made it difficult for pedestrians to know their footing. One minute, they had to lean forward against the wind; the next, they had to brace themselves back against it. Faces were tense. Shirts and coats waved and beat and flapped. People clutched their hats.

Mr J. Breastbuck Coleeb was making headway northward up the avenue, approaching the four skyscrapers which stood at each corner of the bridge. On the near side, the London Life Building, and the new skyscraper called 333. And, on the far side, across the river, the Tribune tower, with its suggestions of Gothic architecture, and the white, unshapely mass of the Wrigley Building.

Coleeb was a man in the early forties, well trained in the natural sciences and a rather keen observer of human conduct. From the behaviour of the human species, more than from the behaviour of animals, birds, or insects, he derived much amusement. Squarely built, he gave the impression of being vigorous and rough-and-tumble. The cast of his features was alternately skeptical and humorous. As he drove forward, his jaws were clenched and looked as though he were biting hard on the stem of a pipe. The characteristic squint of his eyes was exaggerated in an effort to keep flying dirt from entering them.

He shot a glance upward at the high vault of grey-blue sky, and, as if from a sky vantage point, he looked down and saw himself, together with several hundred of his fellow creatures, being bullied by the winds. This spectacular concert of biped antics struck him humorously. And then he smiled satirically at the thought that he, a human intelligence, in this trivial circumstance, was giving sufficient evidence of man's helplessness in Nature.

He seemed to be hurrying; but this was more because of his

struggle with the wind currents than because of a feeling of urgency to be exactly on time for his appointment in the Wrigley Building at 10:00 A. M.

As he neared the bridge, he glanced up and across the river to note the clock on the Wrigley tower. Seeing that he was fifteen minutes early, he returned to scanning with interest the faces he passed by.

And then he chanced to catch a glimpse of something which gave him a shock of unexpected recollection. He noticed, on the farther side of the bridge, coming rapidly towards him, a velour hat of light green colour and peculiar shape, a bent head, and a smart morning suit. The sight made Coleeb instantly exclaim to himself:

"As I live! Costyve Duditch!" Then he added: "In his setting."

The figure sped nearer, allowing Coleeb to see its characteristic short-legged gait, its grey spats, its standing collar. He had no doubt of it.

"Here he comes!" exclaimed Coleeb, opening his eyes wide as one does when viewing a racing auto draw near. He exaggerated his expression of amazement.

No sooner had the words been uttered, than Mr Costyve Duditch, he in fact, moving with a velocity which was extraordinary in the face of such uncertain winds, and among so many people—Mr Costyve Duditch was on and past him. Much as if he had in truth witnessed the approach and passing of a speedy mechanical object, Coleeb jerked himself around and viewed Costyve's departure.

"There he goes!" Coleeb exclaimed, and his face broke into a good-humoured grin. "The rascal! Didn't notice me. Wonder when he arrived in town. I must speak to the dear fellow."

His decision to do so was hastened to action by the fact that passers-by along the bridge jostled him and met his stationary figure with unfriendly eyes. Standing there gazing at the rapidly departing figure of Costyve, he was impeding the pedestrian traffic. So, coming to his normal senses, senses which had been somewhat shocked out of balance by Costyve's glancing impact, Coleeb started in hot pursuit of his old friend Duditch.

"Hey there! Costyve!" he called, when he had almost overtaken him.

Costyve stopped dead, with hunched shoulders. For a few

seconds he neither turned nor budged, but looked as though he were holding himself in blankness prior to some catastrophic onslaught. Then his face brightened and he wheeled around just in time to grasp the hand which otherwise would have clapped him on the back a trifle too vigorously.

"Costyve!" Coleeb exclaimed, as the two men shook hands and looked variously, but both with large smiles, each in the other's face.

"You rascal! You passed me on the bridge and didn't see me."

Costyve smiled with delighted apology, snapped his eyes, and rubbed one of them.

"No wonder," said Coleeb. "We'll need goggles to keep out the dirt, and gas masks to protect our lungs from carbon monoxide before long. When did you get to town?"

"Yesterday," Costyve confessed.

"And leaving to-night?" asked Coleeb, showing his familiarity with the fact that Costyve was continually coming and going from town to town, from country to country.

Costyve nodded in his peculiar way expressive of delighted apology. He seemed to be delighted with the world; apologetic for himself. Delighted with life; apologetic for his own contribution to it.

"Where have you been this time?"

"A short trip," answered Costyve. "To Spain—Toledo and the Balearic Islands."

"Well!" said Coleeb. "How was it?"

"Fantastic! Topping!" Costyve responded, enthusiastically.

"You must tell me about it. When am I going to see you? You leave to-night? Where were you last time?"

"Constantinople," Costyve answered.

"And before that?"

"Persia."

"And before that?"

"Peking," answered Costyve.

"By God!" Coleeb exclaimed, "you do get around, don't you?" And then he told him: "Everybody's been wondering about you."

Costyve brightened and said: "Conceive it!" which was his way of phrasing, "You don't say!" It was evident that it pleased

him very much to know that people remembered him and thought of him.

"Yes, indeed," said Coleeb. "We've been wondering where you were, and when you'd come back. Why don't you let people know when you are coming?"

At this question, Costyve immediately showed by a quick batting of his eyelids, and by the protective way in which he drew in his lips and chin, that he was embarrassed. Indeed, with his friends, Costyve wanted to evade the personal factor in his comings and goings. To travel, yes. To see all manner of things, yes, yes! But he was a little touchy on the subject that he, Duditch, personally, moved about so much. Hoping to avoid any mention of this, it was a trick of his to arrive in town unannounced; and then, when discovered by someone, he usually tried to give the impression that he had been there all along. But he had not been able to work this technique on Coleeb.

"It is such a bother," he answered, off-hand, but could not hide the fact that he was telling a fib and knew it.

Just then, someone bumped into him. Standing there on the crowded boulevard, the wonder was that it hadn't happened before. So Coleeb suggested that they move out of the way of the pedestrians and find shelter from the wind. They stood in the entrance of a near-by building.

"A bother for whom?" asked Coleeb, feeling that he wanted to have it out with Costyve, "for you or for your friends?"

"For both, I fear," answered Duditch, and fidgeted.

"What is it?" Coleeb asked, rather bluntly, and knowing that he had placed his old friend on uncomfortable ground. "You shy from what you fear may be their criticisms of your wanderings? You feel they think you are a sort of aimless globe-trotter, the proverbial rolling stone which gathers no moss?"

"Something like that," Costyve answered, with simple directness. For a short while he lowered his head.

"Well, what if they do?" asked Coleeb. "Who are they to sit in judgement on how valuable or worthless your comings and goings are? They'd have a difficult case proving that they're better off than you. To have a family; not to have a family. To have a recognized career; not to have one. And so on. Well, what's the

real difference? In one case, you do one set of things. In the other, you do another set of things. Either can be worthless. Either can be worthwhile. It all depends on what the given man makes of them. Or so it seems to me."

"That is very true," replied Costyve. "But —" and then, having heard his own position so well defended, he began arguing the case of the settled people against himself, trying to show that they were more productive, more solid; that they had a function in life, that they fulfilled an obligation to society and constituted the backbone of the world; whereas he was like a vagrant, useless appendage.

Costyve's feeling of inferiority to these settled people of whom he, Coleeb, was one, made Coleeb a bit uncomfortable. Not taking kindly to it, he interrupted Duditch's argument to ask:

"You like to travel, don't you?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Costyve, brightening. One could see that he truly did. And then he added: "It is a way of grooming one's person!" A significant smile lit his face.

"Well then," said Coleeb, "what do you care what people think of you? If the truth be told, half of them are envious of what, from their point of view, is your freedom. From a settled background they envy you as much as you, from a moving one, envy them. And those who don't envy you, are always glad to see you, and to know that you're in town. So from now on, I won't hear of any explanations or excuses for your not letting us know when you are coming. Do you understand me, my roving gentleman?"

Costyve said that he did, and felt too pleased to look chastened. Something about Coleeb warmed the cockles of his heart.

"By the way," asked Coleeb, "did you by any chance receive an invitation to Constance Hanover's tea this afternoon?"

"Yes, I did," replied Costyve. "I don't know how she knew. Nice of her, wasn't it? It gives one a warm feeling . . ."

"You don't deserve it," said Coleeb, shaking his head at him. "You just blow in, and blow out, and use cities much as we ordinary mortals use the rooms of our houses. Well, I won't take you to task any more this morning. But this afternoon . . ." and he levelled a finger at him. "I've an appointment at ten. And you seem to be off somewhere."

He put out his hand, grasped Costyve's, and said:

"About 4:30. Remember where her place is?"

Costyve nodded. "On Dearborn Street."

"You do remember your old town, don't you? Well, watch the traffic! I'll see you at 4:30. So long!"

"*Au revoir!*" said Costyve, and waved his arm as he was accustomed to doing so often at train and ship departures.

And the two men parted to go their separate ways until tea time.

As Coleeb walked against the wind to his appointment, he turned over in his mind what a queer fellow this Costyve was. Reserving serious observations and reflections for another time, he recalled with amusement the various odd stories told on Costyve. In particular, he recalled gossip as to how Duditch liked to be remembered by bell-boys, how he liked to be singled out and hailed in a crowd.

It was told, for instance, that if he were scurrying along anonymous in the throngs of Fifth Avenue, New York, or the Boulevard des Capucines, Paris, and someone chanced to notice and recognize him, he was ready to repay this person with his life. The person need not stop and converse with him; he preferred that the person did not. It was enough that he was hailed. "Good morning," or, "How do you do, Mr Costyve Duditch!" He would smile brightly and feel a touch of self-importance. Ships greeting in the night . . . And Costyve, God bless him, would mount a crest and sail on.

It was further told that in pursuit of gratification for this strange trait, he had a way of going from city to city carefully selecting hotels with this wish in mind: that after due period of absence, the doormen, the clerks, the porters, and the bell and elevator boys would remember him, salute him by name, complain that they had not seen him for ages, and, in general, treat him as a visiting dignitary of great worth. His calculations were very shrewd. He never returned to a hotel a month after having stayed in it. For, considering the sized tips he gave everyone, it would have been no mark of remembrance for the entire staff to recall him after so short a lapse of time. No, he never returned to a place thus quickly. A year, two years, three years—and if, after an interval of four years they still saluted him, it was one of the high moments of his life. Thus, since he travelled much, he knew almost every hotel in the world, was known by every Hotel Bristol on the Continent, and,

unfortunately, sacrificed many a pleasant hour by the hearth-side in order to gratify this strange weakness.

Coleeb, picturing Duditch in the midst of these antics, did not fail to perceive the distorted wish for recognition which underlay them; and his sense of amusement was replaced by a feeling of pathos. He drew a deep breath, shook his head soberly; and then, having reached the Wrigley Building, entered it.

Costyve, feeling much set-up as a result of his encounter with Coleeb, sped along to fulfil his morning's plan. His day went off like clock-work.

He had a faculty for sleeping well. He slept soundly. Neither dreams nor conscience disturbed him. If he happened to hit the bed flat on his back—that way he slept. If curled on his side, if round on his belly—so he slept till early morning. No day came to find him other than refreshed and full of energy to get up.

Of mornings, his first trick was to thrust his toes from the sheets and twinkle them. Then, with a bright-eyed grin on his face, bouncing up, he would dash in and frisk under a cold shower. Shave. And then into street clothes.

He had many suits. Tweeds, and serges, and fabrics from all quarters of the earth. He also liked tailors to remember him. But whatever else he put on, these two items were indispensable and unchangeable: his spats, his grey spats, and a standing collar. They served to give him an air of distinction wherever he went, and he was strongly inclined to wear them in warm weather and in hot climates. And, also, to discerning eyes, they evoked the pathetic aura of a bachelor; perfectly dressed, but never in his life to possess either mistress, lover, or wife. Ah yes, 'twas said that Mr Costyve Duditch was a gelding.

However, in other respects, he stood in sufficient answer to those critics of America who say that we are a fatigued and enervated people. For instance, he was indefatigable, with spirits always up. True, now and again he had trouble with his kidneys; but, save for this trifling occasional ailment, he was in sound good health and had an enviable appetite. In fact, he could eat almost any kind of food and cooking with no concern for indigestion. Also, he was free to pick up and leave for remote corners of the earth with

never a care about getting fixed up by doctors and dentists before he left. Nor did he require that there be such persons where he went. Central Africa, Tibet, Alaska, the South Seas—it was all the same to him: no place held terror or discomfort. Hence he was free to enjoy the unique strangenesses and delights of each.

What would have happened to him had his spirits flagged; what would have been his outlook had he suddenly contracted gout, or severe rheumatism, or low blood pressure, or Bright's disease—ah well, he seemed immune from virulent bacteria, organic and psychological—let him be.

Now right after breakfast he always did something. Sometimes he had definite business to attend to. But whether he had or not, he invariably sallied forth regularly and promptly at 9:00 A. M., hailed a taxi, took a bus or a jinricksha, or bounced along the street, according to the place and mood, headed for the business district. No matter what part of the world he was in. For his purposes, Peking was just as good as Moscow, Moscow just as good as Paris, London, New York, or Chicago. All he wanted was to taste some kind of commercial atmosphere first thing in the morning. He had a need to feel in touch with the forms and rhythms of man's tangible necessities. Once in the midst of things, his fertile brain would not wait long before inventing something definite to do.

This morning, after leaving Coleeb, he steered towards the Loop, and paid a round of visits to men with whom he really had business connexions. He visited the offices of his real estate agent and of his stock broker. In both places he tarried just long enough to get a smell of the office atmosphere. His affairs, he found, were going quite well without his personal attention. So, after an exchange of greetings, and after receiving a number of tips which he promptly forgot, he quit his brokers and went to his bank to clip coupons. This done, his urgent business for the morning was finished. But there still remained an hour before lunch. To fill this, he conceived the notion of inspecting merchandise in various large department stores.

On entering Marshall Field's he should have found himself in a place of lofty ceilings, large white pillars, and, in general of rather grand proportions. But neither he nor any other of the buzzing throng of morning shoppers took notice of these proportions.

Women with eyes close to their noses pressed along the aisles and crowded about the counters, viewing and fingering stuffs of silk, cotton, leather, jewels. . . . Costyve himself darted and ducked through the women, giving the impression that he was in urgent search of some special something which was nowhere to be found. However, as he passed the cut-glass counter, a particularly fine bowl caught his attention and caused him to pause. The longer he gazed at it the more it won his admiration. So, at length, he asked the saleswoman to let him examine it.

He took the bowl in rather nervous fingers and began turning it round, viewing its designs and rather exquisite workmanship. He came to like it so well that his mind began searching to find someone to whom he could send it as a gift. And just then, by God, the bowl slipped from his hands and crashed on the floor, sending glittering splinters in all directions. Costyve, in consternation, literally jumped in the air. The saleswoman made hysterical sounds and gestures. And several people, including the floor-walker, gathered. Duditch, flushed and flustered, jumpy all over, fumbled for his bill-case. He stuttered in asking the price of the bowl, apologized, and, finally, amid much hubbub, the greater part of which he himself created, settled the matter by having the bowl placed on his charge account. This done, and feeling that all the eyes in the world were on him, all fingers shaking at him reprovingly, he hastened to leave the store.

And then, outside, on Wabash Avenue, with the entire Loop crushing and crashing about him, he had a sharp feeling that he must also leave Chicago immediately. The city suddenly seemed to be in the same condition as the bowl. Always when he broke something, which he was continually doing—either literally breaking something, or building up a scheme or a wish only to have it collapse on him—he felt like this: that he, the most clumsy person in the world, had shattered the finest things the world contained. And in this mood, he always headed towards a railroad station or a ship's pier. So now, he jumped into a taxi and was driven to the Santa Fe station, where he changed the time of his departure from 10:00 P. M. to 7:00 P. M. Had not Miss Hanover's tea prevented him, he would have left as soon as he could gather his bags.

For lunch, Costyve avoided his club, fearing he might run into

friends who would ask him why he hadn't let them know that he was coming to town. The restaurant selected happened to be a dismal affair, depressing; and save that the food stimulated him, he would have sunk into melancholy worse than any he had known in years.

After lunch he bucked himself up and returned to his apartment, there to engage himself till 4:30.

This apartment, a four-room suite located in the section of Chicago near the Drake Hotel, he kept on lease year in and year out. Its rent had been raised several times; he had paid the increase cheerfully. It was the one place in the world to which he could turn with a feeling of having a settled habitat. It was the one place which gave him a sense of having anchorage. He did not want to dwell in it constantly. He had no sentimental regrets about leaving it. But there were comfort and cheer in the knowledge that, furnished with certain of the objects which he cherished, it was there, his own, for him to return to whenever he wished.

One room was his sleeping-room. Another he kept for a possible guest. A third was a sitting-room, containing a baby grand piano, several comfortable chairs, and an odd assortment of objects such as pottery, weapons, articles of dress and ornament, a tiger skin, a number of ancient-looking manuscripts—things which, from time to time, he had brought home from various quarters of the earth. In addition to these, the room now was littered with Costyve's bags, suit-cases, coats, hats, and what not. It had a musty smell owing to its having been occupied so little.

The fourth room, a dark box-like affair which usually had to be lit by electricity, Costyve called his study. Here he kept, in glass-enclosed cases, his books. And here also he hid away in three different covers the notes which for years he had been making and which, some day, he hoped to work over and organize in three separate volumes. Already he had titles for these books of his.

One, dealing with travel as a factor in the shaping of a cultured person, was to be called: *The Influence of Travel on the Personality*. An alternate title for this book was: *How Travel Grooms the Person*.

A second book, descriptive of the love-affairs of great men, concerning which, if the book were ever published, Costyve would prove

himself a specialist, was to be called: *When Love was Great*. He also thought of calling this book: *Finesse in Love*. He could not quite decide whether he wished to emphasize the bold strength of great men's loves, or the subtlety of management which they displayed.

And the third, treating the creative processes as they are manifest in life and art, was to be titled: *There is No Life Without Creation*.

Now if, first thing in the morning, Costyve visited the business district, the second thing he did, right after lunch, was to apply himself to his literary work. This also he did irrespective of what part of the world he was in.

So now, returning to his apartment, he cleansed himself of Chicago's dirt, put on a gorgeous silk and gold-embroidered mandarin's cloak which he used as a house robe, went into his study, switched on the lights, and began adding to his given collection the notes he had taken for the past year. There was so much assorting and arranging to be done that, for a while, his activity amounted to no more than librarian's work. In time, however, amid much fussing and fuming, and repeated runnings to the bath-room for water, he managed to penetrate beneath the surface of his material dealing with the influence of travel on the personality. Opinions and points which had come to his mind during the talk with Coleeb found their way into his notes.

After writing a page which moderately satisfied him—and surprised him—he glanced at his watch and was shocked to see that it was already 4:45. He jumped up, put his notes carefully away, hustled into his street clothes, and rushed to Miss Hanover's.

Constance Hanover was a woman of class and refinement, tall, with flowing lines and an easy grace of movement. A charming hostess, she managed all affairs, social and other, exceedingly well, exerting no apparent effort to do so.

To this tea, an informal affair given for no special person, she had invited in addition to Coleeb and Costyve a number of friends and acquaintances whom she wished to see and chat with. Had she known in time that Costyve was going to be in town, she most certainly would have given it for him especially. As it was, she

planned to so manipulate things that he would become a sort of unannounced lion of the occasion. This she aimed to do not only because she found Costyve interesting and amusing, but also because his pathetic side appealed very strongly to her and made her want to help and advance him in any way she could.

The room in which she was going to pour tea showed taste in decoration, with an eye for ease and comfort. Its walls were done in soft-toned silver grey; and on its walnut floor there was a modern French rug in grey and rose. On either side of an open hearth, in which a wood fire was crackling, stood a wing- and an arm-chair. And across from the hearth, against the opposite wall, a lounge. On a low table everything was in readiness for pouring either tea or coffee. The china and silverware, of old-fashioned design, had been in her family for years. It was recognized by everyone that this room and Miss Hanover belonged together.

Around 4:30 her friends began coming. They drove up in town-cars, taxis—and one or two walked. Two society women, stunningly dressed, and both interested also in the fine arts. A young painter who, in addition to his small canvases, was doing murals for hotels and having quite a success with them. A professor from the University. A critic of literature. A charming young poet who had just finished a long poem in the modern idiom and was undecided whether he ought to be proud or ashamed of it. An actress who was playing the leading part in a rather serious drama which several weeks before had come to Chicago from New York. A French diplomat and his wife. A timorous-looking woman, a friend of Miss Hanover's college days. She had been asked to pour tea. And Coleeb.

They were shown in by a manservant, and, after the usual greetings, they were told by Miss Hanover that Mr Costyve Duditch, just returned from Toledo, Spain, was in town and would be to tea. Without exception, those who already knew him were surprised, delighted, and even eager to see him. While the few others let it be seen how eager they too were. And thus it was that by the time he arrived he found a chatting gathering which was quite willing to lionize him.

Dressed for the afternoon, as if he were in London rather than in Chicago, Costyve made his tardy appearance, delighted and

apologetic. His entrance was greeted by a round of murmurs and exclamations such as one would expect to hear on the return of a prodigal; and he had hardly had time to meet the people who were strangers to him before on every side they were asking that he tell them of his latest travels. However, Miss Hanover saved him from breathless confusion by suggesting that he be allowed to have his first cup of tea in comfort, and that thereafter all who wished could ply him with questions to their heart's content.

The wing-chair near the hearth was vacated for him, and Costyve ensconced himself in it, looked very bright and pleased, comfily, sipped his tea, and incidentally took over the office of keeping the fire burning. Ever so often he would lean over, stir the embers with a poker, and, with a quick jerky movement, throw on another piece of wood.

The minute his first cup was put aside, he was asked so many questions, he had difficulty keeping track of them. But, beaming all over—feeling secure and released by the fact that travel, and not he personally, was the subject of discussion—he grew very talkative, now and again threw wood on the fire, and answered, contrived to answer most of them.

He told them about places, things, and cities in all quarters of the world: in England, Scotland, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, Turkey, Persia, India, and China. The roads, the hotels, the food, the language, the kind of money, in each. It is to his credit that he succeeded in adding to the mere information he gave, some of his ideas as to the value of travel as an aid, an indispensable aid, in grooming the person. Fortunately, everyone took kindly to these notions; and thus they let him feel that he had a place and function in the world. Indeed they gave him such a sense of wholeness that both the cut-glass bowl and the entire city of Chicago were temporarily mended: he began to regret that he was leaving so soon. Here in this company, in his own town, the purpose and end of his wanderings seemed about to receive not only recognition but fulfilment.

But it was not until he began telling of Toledo and the El Grecos that he really swung into his stride. In describing the city, in pointing out how one never caught the true spirit and meaning of El Greco's genius until one had seen his art in the midst of the very conditions, physical and spiritual, which had given it birth and form, he

was able to expand, and, by the use of major examples, to demonstrate that a truly cultured personality could never be formed unless one did travel widely and thus tap the currents of civilization at their sources.

The young painter particularly was interested in what Costyve had to say about El Greco. And so, in a way, was Coleeb. For he, Coleeb, with a good friend of his, had once spent an interesting hour before the El Grecos in the museum in Boston. Mentioning this to Costyve, and asking him if he had ever seen them, Coleeb was not surprised to learn that Duditch was familiar with them and with most things in Boston also.

While Costyve talked on, Coleeb lapsed into silence, slouched in his corner of the lounge, squinted, and began attentively to observe Duditch's behaviour.

The first thing he noticed was that Costyve's tone of voice had little or no relation to, no connexion with, the various subjects he talked about. Whatever the subject, whether it were the price of a railroad ticket across Siberia, or a Hindu temple; whatever the theme, whether it were gossip about people or serious discussion of art and life, his tone contained an odd pathetic pleading apologetic persuasive quality mingled with a note which suggested that he was delighted with something, perhaps with life, and as pleased with himself as he dared be. This tone of voice appeared to go on by itself, yes, expressing some reality, maybe expressing the fundamental tone of Costyve's temperament; but it rarely if ever changed to suit the various topics of conversation. And so, on first hearing, it seemed to be strangely unrelated not only to the subjects, but to Costyve himself. It gave the impression of being disembodied. A voice, sounding on the face of the earth, pleading and delighted, pleading for no one, delighted with no tangible thing.

Queerly impressed by this observation, Coleeb then turned to note what he could of Costyve's mental behaviour. It was not long before he saw that here too, as in his bodily movements, Duditch appeared to be continually coming and going. His face alternated between three distinct expressions. One, a bright-eyed, eager, fertile expression. By this you could know, some seconds before its arrival, that an idea was coming to him. Then, once the idea had come and had been vocalized, sometimes with an odd confusion of

words, sometimes with a surprising aptness and clarity, you could tell that it was going by the vacant look which swiftly descended on him. And, third, when quite gone, you would know this by the curious silent anticipatory way he would stare at you—an expression suggesting that though his own mind which only a minute before had been full was now blank, he expected either himself or you to say something of importance immediately.

To these noticed traits, Coleeb added what he knew of Costyve's emotional life: the fact that Duditch was continually building houses of cards only to have them collapse on him, the fact that his growing emotional interests were marked by outbursts of enthusiasm and by an ever increasing fever of activity, and that his waning interest was characterized by a sort of pathetic disillusion and by a semi-frustrated eagerness to find some new attachment to take its place—Coleeb added these known facts to his current perceptions and thus obtained a fairly complete outline of how Costyve acted.

Meanwhile, Costyve himself, still the centre of the company, had left Toledo and El Greco in favour of a seldom visited island off the coast of Greece. And it was at this point that the timorous-looking woman, Miss Hanover's college friend, asked him a question which allowed Costyve to reveal himself in a new light. In fact, in answering it he not only showed forth an aspect of himself unknown even to his close friends, but said something which caused the abrupt termination of the tea.

"But, Mr Duditch," he was asked by a quivering feminine voice, "suppose you were to die in some far-off outlandish place. What ever would happen to your body?"

This fearful mention of death threw a vaguely nervous cloud over the gathering and disturbed most of the guests with the exception of Costyve. He, on the contrary, appeared quite at ease, as if he were fully prepared to face what for others was an alarming aspect of reality. Looking in a matter-of-fact way at his timid questioner, he replied:

"It would be disposed of according to the custom of the place."

"Not even sent home?" she asked, visibly withdrawing from the opposite possibility. All were concerned to hear his answer.

"Home?" he asked. "Do you mean by home, here, Chicago?"

"Yes," she said, trembling. "To your relatives and friends here."

"But my dear lady," Costyve replied. "To a man who has made the world his home—tut, tut—I have not forgotten Chicago—but, beneath the pavement it is all earth, is it not? It is earth here, in New York, in Constantinople, in Mecca, in Bombay, or in some spot without name. Would not the same changes occur in my dead organism whatever the place? For sure, they would. So you see. I have no doubt but what some fine morning a strange person using a foreign tongue will enter my room, cast one frightened glance at my body lying there, and say, 'He's dead'."

Having said this, with more dramatic impressiveness than was his wont, Costyve paused; and the idea of death was about to leave him. But it remained with the others so vividly that each one identified with the picture which Duditch had conjured, and saw himself or herself dead stretched out in a strange room. Even their own usually familiar rooms would be strange if they were dead in them. They felt this with a quick catch of breath.

"Mr Duditch!" several exclaimed, and looked at him to say that he had mentioned an impolite and terrifying thing.

It was Costyve's turn to look surprised and dismayed. He could not imagine what he had done to deserve this sudden reversal.

"He's dead" rang ominously in their ears. The longer they heard it the more aghast they became. The image struck deeper and deeper into them.

"I'm dead," an impossible thing which some invisible force made them grapple with and realize to be true. Shock on their faces, each one tried to view himself and did look at the others. True, every single person there would have it said about him, sooner or later: "He's dead," or "She's dead."

Being not at all like the ancient Egyptians who used to have mummies brought into their feasts, the present gathering took strenuous exception to such ideas and feelings at an afternoon tea.

Abruptly, one after the other, they arose to tell Miss Hanover how nice her tea had been, gingerly shake Costyve's trembling hand, and leave. In no time at all, Coleeb, Costyve, and of course Miss Hanover were the sole ones remaining. Poor Duditch knew he had broken something, but could not tell what. He was tense, fidgety, and miserable, and made the situation awkward for the other two.

Coleeb regarded him, trying to determine whether his expressed attitude towards death were merely due to lack of imagination or

to a well considered unwillingness to place more value on his body than its worth. If this latter, then it was a sign of more intelligence and sense of reality than he was usually credited with. Coleeb could not decide which.

Miss Hanover tried to smoothe the thing over; but in doing so she somehow gave Costyve the impression that beneath her kind words she really saw how ridiculous and helpless he was, and pitied him. This made him feel worse than if she had put him out of her house and slammed the door on him. He could not bear to have any one pity him. He made several futile gestures in denial of what he took to be her inner attitude; and then, before either she or Coleeb knew what was happening, Costyve darted towards the hall, left his hat behind, and rushed out the door into the street.

Flying down the avenue, his world smashed to bits about him, he was aware of no wish save to see no human being on earth, of no need save to leave Chicago as fast as a train could carry him.

He never could remember how he reached his apartment, got his things together, and arrived at the station.

Once there, he called to his service a staff of porters and had them shoulder more bags, suit-cases, and odds and ends than the law allows, himself, like a little general, at the head of them. Several bystanders laughed at the sight of him. But to an observing eye Costyve's departure was a matter of pathos no less than of comicality. For, rushing and active with fuss and to-do, surrounded by things and people though he was, his spirit hugged itself in loneliness and felt goaded by a thousand shattered hopes.

Ah well, it was a matter for this night only. For, on awaking in the morning to find himself speeding over some southwest section of the American wilderness, he would bounce from berth, bowl up the aisle, and out-beam all the men in the shaving-room.

A SONG TO CALIFORNIA .

BY CARL JOHN BOSTELMANN

Hear me!

I have had alkali on my boots;

O hear my song—

I who have had poppies on my eyes,
California.

I have wandered

About your brown hills and your blue mountains,

Down into your ripe green valleys

And along your infinite roads!

Dias dorados!

Your golden days I have utilized

In my vagrant wandering, pursuing your music

As a child, meandering casually,

Pursues romance in a museum.

O thunder and stars!

I have lain through many a long night

By a waterhole, listening. I have heard

The rhythmic drums of marching cattle

In your hills under the moon.

I have stood hip-deep in your cotton,

And shoulder-high your alfalfa has grown

About me in the San Joaquin Valley.

I have harvested sugar prunes

In the Santa Clara orchards,

Stricken with their beauty

Even as Hercules must have been

When he plucked the Hesperian apples!

A SONG TO CALIFORNIA

I have sewed sacks on a harvester when your grain
Was a flood of gold in the shutes.
On the roads with a shovel and pick,
On the canals with a sickle and pike,
On the ranches, I have sweat and strained
To become part of you!

Gold—gold—gold! Everywhere, gold!
El dorado!

On your rivers, at the weirs and the dams,
I have witnessed the salmon, leaping the ladders,
Daring the gauntlet of spears,
In water knee-deep, to win to the headwaters
To spawn. I have seen the water silver
With their pilgrimage, a pageant of glory!

I have run like the wind across your plain,
Chasing the tumbleweed, shouting whoops,
Wild with vigour, crazy with fever!
I have bathed in the surges that wash upon your beaches.
I have drowsed in the sun, under the blue sky,
On the white sand.

Your palms have spread their shade for me,
Your redwoods, your pines, your spruce,
Your aspens, your eucalyptus, your cottonwoods!
You have flavoured the air I breathed, with them
And with the orange-blossoms, the cherry-blossoms,
The prune-blossoms, the apple-blossoms,
Of your orchard gardens!
You knew me then, California!

I have discovered your lakes,
Fragments of sky in the vales of your mountains,
Fringed with the margins of forests,
Sapphire blue at noon
As your heavens!

I have heard the rumble of fountains,
Plumed gushers of oil, speaking your might
With a roar like your rivers'!

I have danced to a chorus of turbines
Humming a new music,
Chanting new songs of Sierra!

Mistress of the West,
You would sift more alkali on my old boots!
You would place fresh poppies on my eyes!
You would give me your brown hills and your blue mountains,
Your ripe green valleys and your infinite roads!

Dias dorados!

O dream of golden days!
No mortal can ask more than you have given, California.
You have given me yourself, California!

THE MUSIC OF THE DEGENERATE

BY MAXIM GORKI

Translated From the Russian by Marie Budberg

IT is night.

Yet—it seems somewhat unsuitable—the word night—confronted by this wonderful sky of Southern Italy, this atmosphere impregnated with blue light and with the aromatic warmth of a kindly soil. The light seems to pour not from the sun, reflected by the golden rays of the moon, but from that indefatigably prolific soil, laboriously, masterfully tilled by human hands. The silver-tinted olive-leaves, the stony foundations of the mountains breathe noiseless light; these walls protect from landslips, defining on the rocks, vast plains sown with corn, planted with beans, potatoes, and cabbage—laid out with vines, and orange and lemon groves. How much wise, tenacious labour has been lavished here!—The orange and yellow fruit also shines through the transparent, silvery mist, adding to the earth a queer likeness to the sky blossoming with stars. One is led to think that the earth has been carefully ornamented by its labourers for a great feast and that after resting to-night, to-morrow, at sunset, they will rejoice and make merry.

The silence is immutable. Everything on earth is so still, it would seem to have been chiselled by the hand of a great artist, cast in bronze and blue silver. The perfection of peace and beauty inspires one with solemn thoughts of the inexhaustible power of human labour, labour that creates all the miracles of our world; communicates to one the certitude that with time this triumphant force will compel even the soil of the extreme North to work for man twelve months of the year, will break it in, as it does animals. Joyfully and as the French say, reverently one meditates upon man, the miracle-worker, upon the splendid future which he is preparing for his sons.

Memory evokes the figures and faces of workers in the field of science: Professor Vaviloff, strolling about Abyssinia, seeking the dissemination centres of nourishing graminaceous plants with a view to spreading in his country such of them as do not fear drought; one recalls D. Prianishnikov's story of beds of acid of

potassium at the source of the Kama; all the men whom one has come to know rise before one: the great man J. Pavloff, Rutherford in his laboratory in Montreal in 1906; dozens of Russians, founders of science, stand forth in memory and, bringing back all one has read, contribute to the concept of the wonderfully prolific, ever increasingly active work of the world's scientists. We live in an epoch when the distance from the maddest vagaries to the most matter-of-fact realities is being diminished with incredible speed.

Recently one of our territorial investigators, Andrej Bokhareff from Kozloff reminded me in a letter, of two such miracle-workers, Luther Burbank, the American "self-made man," and our man of genius, Ivan Michurin. I take the liberty of publishing an extract from his letter, hoping that Bokhareff could have no objection.

The Letter:

"Luther Burbank discovered, as is known, a number of mysteries in the domain of intersective miscegenation of fruit-bearing plants, and managed to produce species of plants not only marvellous but monstrous in their luxuriance, adaptability, taste, immunity to illnesses and plant enemies, thus enriching the entire continent of America. To mention his eatable, thornless cactuses and the nuts, the stone-hard shells of which he transformed into a membrane thin as a leaf, suffices to suggest the picture of this giant of fructification.

There is in the Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics—in the district of Tambov, on the meagre soil of eternal snow-drifts, hemmed in by the foliage of wild willows, poplars, and maples, the smaller in proportion, but even more marvellous truck-garden of the hybridizer, Ivan Michurin.

Luther Burbank worked for subtropic California with its favourable climate; Michurin, for the stern climate of Central Russia.

Luther Burbank produced many new species of fruit-bearing plants intended for the consumption of the rich. Michurin has produced more than a hundred species of fruit-bearing trees, among which are pears that ripen just before Christmas (in cellars and cases) and are preservable in prime condition until April. This alone means riches to the workers. Then in the stern atmosphere of Tambov, Michurin has managed to grow luxuriant apricot-trees, grapes (four kinds), almond-trees, nuts, mulberry-trees, rice, quinces, et cetera—all for the workers, for our country, for the inexperienced peasant-orchard-grower with his limited knowledge.

Luther Burbank carefully tended his nurslings. Michurin bred

his in Spartan conditions, that the species might withstand any environment and produce the necessary economic result. When he started his work, Luther Burbank was poor, but after his scientific successes, he revelled in the luxuriousness of American culture. Owing to the sad condition of Russian life formerly, Michurin existed in poverty close to misery. During his long life of struggle, of anxieties, failures and disappointments, defeats and victories, he attained results that will enrich not only Central Russia, but the whole temperate zone. In a word Michurin transplants the south to the north.

Luther Burbank and Ivan Michurin symbolize the opposite poles of gardening, but in their general aspect are very much alike.

Both began their work in early youth, both were poor, both became great philosophers, artists, and creators. Both made great discoveries in the domain of plant-growing. To Michurin's lot has fallen the great discovery of adaptation in methods of fruit-growing, by the aid of which man will probably in the immediate future produce not only new types, but also new species of fruit-bearing plants, more fully corresponding to the demands of life and better adapted to the inevitable changes in climatic conditions.

Michurin's work was known in America as much as eighteen years before the war, his types being widely cultivated there; and the well-known botanist of the Washington Agricultural Institute, Professor Meyer, visited him at his home throughout a period of years. In 1924 Michurin's work received wide recognition in Germany. He is honorary member of the Naturalists' Association of the Commissariat for Public Instruction, et cetera, et cetera.

Michurin is a veteran. He is seventy-two, but still goes on creating, drawing away one by one, the veils which conceal the mysteries of plants."

The stillness of this night, permitting the mind to rest from the various if paltry grievances of the day's work, seems to whisper to the soul a solemn music of the universal labour of great and small, a magnificent song of a new history—a song boldly raised by the working people of my country.

Then, all of a sudden, in the sensitive stillness resounds the dry knocking of an idiotic hammer—one, two, three, ten, twenty strokes and after them—as a splash of mud in clear transparent water, there come with a crash, a wild whistle, screeches, rumbling, wailing, howling, the snorting of a metal pig, the cry of a

donkey, the amorous quacking of a monstrous frog. All this insulting chaos of mad sounds is submitted to an imperceptible rhythm and after listening for one, two minutes to those wails, one begins unwillingly to imagine that this is an orchestra of maniacs, stricken with sexual mania and directed by a man-stallion who brandishes a huge genetic member.

That is the radio—one of the greatest discoveries of science, one of the mysteries wrested by it from nature, hypocritically silent. It is the radio in a neighbouring hotel, bringing consolation to a world grown gross, the world of birds of prey—transporting to them on air the tune of a new fox-trot executed by a negro-orchestra. It is the music of grossness. To its rhythm in all the magnificent "cabarets" of a cultured continent the degenerate, with cynical fluctuations of the hips, pollute, simulate, the fecundation of woman by man.

From time immemorial the poets of all nations, all epochs, have lavished their creative power in ennobling this act, adorning it, making it worthy of man that in this he should not be on a plane with the goat, bull, or boar. Hundreds, thousands of beautiful poems have been composed in praise of love—an emotion which has ever been potent in stimulating the creative powers of men and women. Through the force of love man has become a being far more social than the cleverest of animals. Poetry expressing a matter-of-fact, healthy, active romanticism in sex relationship has had great educative and social importance for humanity.

Love and hunger govern the world, said Schiller. Love, as the basis of culture, hunger as that of civilization. Then came an over-grown vampire, a parasite living on the labour of others, a semi-man with the motto: "After me the deluge," and with his thick feet he tramples all that has been created by the finest nervous tissue of great artists, the illuminators of the working classes.

He, the gross, does not need woman as a friend and human being; she is for him a mere tool of pleasure, unless she is as much a bird of prey as he is himself. As a mother she is of no use to him, for although he is fond of power, children are an impediment to him. Power, too, seems necessary to him only for fox-trotting and the latter has become a necessity because a man grown porcine is already a poor male. Love for him is—depravity, and not, as it was, mere appetite. In the world of the gross, homosexual love acquires an epidemic character. The evolution of grossness is—degeneration.

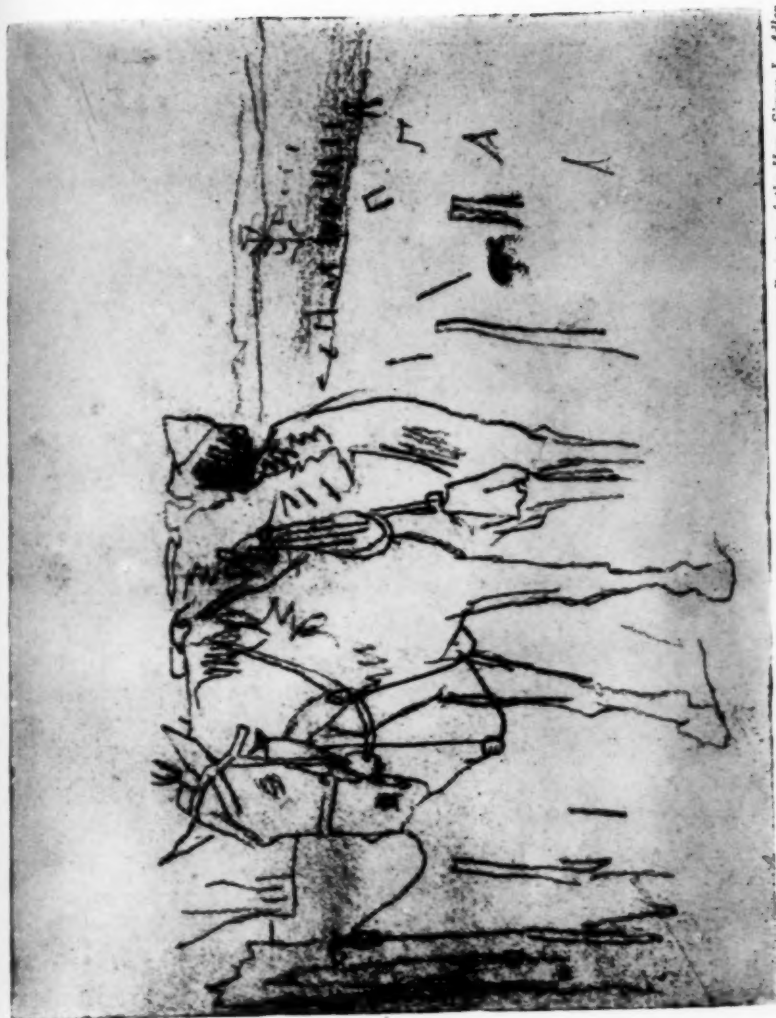
It is the evolution from the charm of a minuet and the passionate vitality of a waltz, to the cynicism of a fox-trot with the convulsions of the Charleston; from Mozart and Beethoven to the jazz of the negroes who undoubtedly laugh in their sleeves seeing how their white masters evolve towards a savagery which the negroes of America are leaving behind them more and more rapidly. "Culture is declining," cry those who would like to see prevail over the working-man, the prestige of grossness. The proletariat threatens to do away with culture! Its constituents cry and lie, for they cannot remain blind to the fact that it is the universal herd of the bestial which is trampling culture; they cannot fail to understand that the proletariat is the only force capable of saving culture, of fathoming and widening it.

The monstrous bass throws out English words; a wild horn wails piercingly, reminding one of the cries of a raving camel; a drum drones; a nasty little pipe sizzles, tearing at one's ears; the saxophone emits its quacking nasal sound. Swaying, fleshy hips, thousands of heavy feet, tread and shuffle.

The music of the degenerate ends finally with a deafening thud, as though a case of pottery had been flung from the skies to the earth. Again limpid stillness reigns around me and my thoughts return home; the peasant Vassily Kucheriavenko writes to me from there: "Before, in our village we used to have one school for three hundred houses; now we have three, a co-operative society, three red 'corners,' a club, a library, a reading-room, various groups; we have a wall-newspaper, we subscribe to countless reviews, papers, books. In the evenings—from white-haired old men to red pioneers—the clubs are crammed with all kinds of people. Lately an old woman of seventy-two died; before her death she used to say she would have loved to join the union of young communists had she not been so old. Why had it all begun so late, she said! She begged to be buried in the Soviet manner, with the flag. She went to all the meetings, walking many versts, and was like a girl.—Recently in an American review, *Asia*, there was an article about all this, with photographs."

She is a curious person, that old grandmother. Of course: "One grandam will not make culture," as the proverb says, but how many do I know of such, let us say, amusing cases of rejuvenation of the ancient peasant, all pointing to one conclusion: the Russian nation is growing young.

How fine it is to be working and living in our time!



Property of the Hon. Simon L. Adler

HORSE AWAITING ITS RIDER. BY WINSLOW HOMER

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THE LETTER

BY SERG ZAJAITSKY

Translated From the Russian by Marie Budberg

ON COMING home from my office, I found a note pinned to the door of my room:

"I should like very much to see you. Could you call at my house; the address is Anastassiinsky pereulok, 9.

Yours, Baranoff."

I knew of no Baranoff.

"Look," I said to my neighbour, "perhaps this note from Baranoff is intended for you?"

"From Kosloff, you mean?"

He did not know Baranoff either.

Of course Baranoff might have mistaken the house, the flat, the street.

Goodness only knows what else he might have mistaken, Baranoff.

Pushkin once said that all Russians were lazy and not inquisitive. But then I am only half-Russian, my mother was a Pole: therefore I am lazy, but inquisitive.

The mysterious Baranoff lived in a small, one-storied house. I was about to knock, when the door suddenly opened of its own accord and a woman in a thick leopard fur passed, glancing at me with eyes that seemed wonderfully familiar.

"The citizen Baranoff is at home?" I asked.

She nodded merely and walked away—head bent—wrapping the spotted fur tight about her. Her gait, too, was familiar.

Finding myself in a dark entrance filled with a strong smell of cabbage, I said loudly:

"Citizen Baranoff."

Hurried steps could be heard and an indisputably familiar man appeared on the threshold. But who was he?

"How splendid of you to come!" he exclaimed. "I was so afraid our pleasant connexion wasn't going to be renewed. It's sad in the happiest days of one's life when somebody turns a cold shoulder and avoids one."

"Is it possible that you could think that!" I returned, shaking hands with him and wondering all the time where the dickens I had met him.

The room was small but tidy; wardrobes screened from view two disparate beds.

"To begin with," he said, "I am now married."

"You don't mean it! To whom?" I cried, managing to control my laughter.

"To her!"

"Ah!"

"To Sonia! To Sofia Alexandrovna!"

As under a flash-light my past suddenly stood out before me. I recalled the winter days of peaceful times, sleighing, purple flowers, and a girl with the eyes that had just glanced at me from the leopard fur. I succeeded in placing Baranoff, as well. Already, at that time, he was supposed to be engaged to her, but for some reason or other the marriage was continually being postponed. I even remembered the girl's nurse who used to repeat the Russian proverb: "The bridegroom to-day is wily and shrewd, you talk of a crown and he of a casket!"

"You know," cried Baranoff, jumping up every little while and sitting down again, "all these years I have lived as everyone else did. I wandered about Russia, was ill with typhoid . . . then . . . shall I tell you the whole story?"

"Of course!"

"I had been in love with Sonia ever since 1911. . . . All that promenading in by-streets, balls and theatres, you know. I loved her terribly. Picture it! Me, a student of chemistry, going to a fortune-teller! Jealousy, that's what it was. I was jealous of everyone. Of you, as well. You were a fine-looking boy at that time, you know."

"Of me . . . !"

"I was, I tell you, madly so! Finally, I proposed to her. She refused, but almost fainted on the spot . . . then came the war, the revolution—the first, the second—Then we Muscovites were scattered all over the earth. Time enough, one might have thought,

to learn reason, but I didn't. Travelling about in the cattle-van I would lie and dream of her. Where was she! How find her? Well, one night I was walking along in the rain, wet snow was falling—when all of a sudden I saw a woman sticking a piece of paper to the wall. At that moment a motor-car passed and lit up the whole street. She looked round—it was Sonetchka! Imagine my emotion! She did not see me. The lantern-light had dazzled her. When the car went by, she had disappeared. I walked up to the wall, struck my lighter, and read:

To sell: a samovar, a cupboard, a mahogany desk (antique).

And it was precisely at that desk that our decisive colloquy had taken place. A beautiful desk. She lived (the address was mentioned) quite near. I must admit that the poverty of her attire had struck me. I did not go myself, fool that I was, from a sense of hurt pride, you know . . . after the refusal . . . (here Baranoff lowered his voice). My neighbour, who speculates in antiques, asks my advice from time to time, as from someone who has seen better days. Well—I advised him to buy the desk. One had to support her in some way, you see. . . . In the evening as I came home, I saw it on a sleigh by the front-door, the same desk! My heart beat wildly. I was very much upset. The speculator was delighted. On the way three men wanted him to sell it to them and a former prince expressed admiration for it. He called me to have a look at it. I told him I would come later. . . . I didn't feel quite up to it, you know . . . Ladies of doubtful reputation used to frequent the shop, and to see that desk, there. . . . All of a sudden he knocked at my door: 'Look at what I found in the desk,' he said. I looked and recognized her handwriting . . . Read it . . . Here it is . . . I wheedled it from him as a reward for recommending a good piece of furniture. Read it!"

I read:

"I don't know that I have the courage to send this letter. I love you, but when I see you, all I say seems wrong. Yesterday I said 'no' to you. Don't believe it . . . Don't misjudge me.

S."

Baranoff was trembling from head to foot with emotion.

"You can imagine what a state I was in! It meant, you see, that the little fool had refused me merely out of girlish shyness, and I, idiot that I was, instead of getting her gradually accustomed to the idea—had taken offence and broken everything off! Well—it all

had to be set right I thought . . . I went to the address given . . . and as you see (he laughed happily) I did set it right . . ."

"I met Sofia Alexandrovna at the door just now and must confess I didn't recognize her!"

"Changed, isn't she? How otherwise! What she has had to go through, poor child! She remembers you . . . I wonder she's not back yet."

He seemed to enjoy troubling about his wife.

"Would you like," he asked suddenly, "to have a look at the desk? My neighbour is at home now. You'll awaken old memories!"

To please him, I agreed.

But at the instant we were knocking at the neighbour's, the bell rang at the front-door.

A stout little man opened his door, and Baranoff ran to let his wife in, shouting back:

"Introduce yourselves, please; this is Gromoff."

"You're fond of old things?" asked Gromoff, leading me to the desk. "They're irresistible, aren't they? Look—how finely they used to work the veneer, the rascals—Nowadays a carpenter could sweat and sweat, ten times over, and not achieve that effect with the polish. And the number of drawers! I cleared all the rubbish out of them to-day."

I started. On one of the envelopes I saw my name written: Alexei Pavlovich Trofimoff.

"Where did this envelope come from?"

"There was a letter inside . . . I gave it to Mr Baranoff . . . A love-letter of some kind. Look at this vase over here! Real Chinese!"

I pushed the envelope into my pocket, saying:

"Permit me to take this as a memento of our acquaintance!"

"Come and have some tea," said Baranoff.—"Sonia has come back. We've got some glucose. Will you come, too?"

"No," answered Gromoff. "I'm busy."

"Always busy."

"How shouldn't I be? One must provide for a rainy day."

Sonetchka greeted me graciously. I observed her with curiosity, but did not notice the slightest trace of confusion on her face. It was pleasant to sit at table with happy people and bring back a happy past.

That day I took a dislike to my room.

"Bliss hath been so near . . ."

A few days later I went to see them again. The same thing over again—tea and bliss. And no signs of regret in her, none.

The fool! Why, oh why had she not sent the letter off, then and there!

"By the way," said Baranoff, "my neighbour said you had taken the envelope of that letter . . ."

"Yes, I was going to give it to you, but forgot all about it . . ."

"Where is it?"

"I lost it."

"How annoying. Hadn't he read the name on it, the idiot?"

"There were a lot of papers inside."

"All the better, if he didn't. I didn't tell him the story. It's not for a head like his."

It seemed to me that Sonetchka blushed ever so slightly. I looked into her eyes, thinking to awaken a romantic complicity between us. But she merely tilted her nose up and threw a glance of such self-satisfied adoration at her husband, at the glucose, at the samovar—that I was submerged in envy.

"Too bad the envelope is missing!"

"Here is a blank one! If you wish to convince yourself once more of your happiness—ask Sofia Alexandrovna to address it."

"Why not? Sonetchka, address it, will you?" And he laughed contentedly, while Sonetchka with a resolute and disapproving glance at me, wrote:

"To Ivan Petrovitch Baranoff."

He gave her a resounding kiss. She moved away, blushing, not because the kiss was distasteful to her, but because she resented my presence. If only I would go! And they could have it all to themselves! Anger rose in my heart.

When we had said good-bye and he was preparing to shut the door behind me, I suddenly exclaimed:

"Ah! There it is! I have found it!"

I took the envelope out of my pocket, pushed it into his hand, and walked away without looking back.

I never saw them again.

PROLOGUE TO BALLOON: A COMEDY

BY PADRAIC COLUM

A Square in Megalapolis. It is towards night-fall. Back, right, is a towering Hotel. Right is a large brass Telescope on stand. The owner of the Telescope is standing by it. He is thoughtful-looking, detached; between thirty-five and forty.

A group of four newspaper men enter left.

TELESCOPE OWNER: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

FIRST REPORTER (*evidently in training*): Say, wouldn't that be a good headline?

SECOND REPORTER: I didn't get it.

FIRST REPORTER: "Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas."

It would look pretty on a page—what?

THIRD REPORTER (*ponderously instructive*): Descriptive—yes.

But only descriptive. Remember that you should always get a verb into the headline. "Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!"—it lacks something. Now what does it lack? A verb. "Extinct Volcanoes threaten Empty Seas." That means something.

FIRST REPORTER: Sure. I get you.

THIRD REPORTER (*still ponderous*): The verb—it's the king-pin in the headline.

FIRST REPORTER: Who is he anyway? The Professor?

SECOND REPORTER: Caspar is his name. He lets you look at the Moon through the Telescope. A silver's the charge. He's been round here quite a while.

FIRST REPORTER: What about getting a story from him?

THIRD REPORTER: What kind of a story do you mean?

FIRST REPORTER: "Obscure Telescope-operator tells of his Vigils."

SECOND REPORTER: Forget it. The day for that sort of thing is gone by.

FOURTH REPORTER: I'm doing Enquiring Reporter to-night. He's good for my question.

(The Reporters talk together. A string of people, men and old women, come from back.)

CASPAR (*addressing these people*): Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

(They halt near him.)

SECOND REPORTER: They're scrub-women and downstairs-workers out of the Hotel.

FIRST REPORTER: Out of the Hotel Daedalus?

SECOND REPORTER: That's where they come from.

CASPAR: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas! Here you are! For one silver you can see the enormous mountains. You can see the volcanoes with craters that are absolutely stupendous—miles and miles across. And then the seas! Absolutely empty. No atmosphere, you see. No more remarkable spectacle can be offered.

SCRUB-WOMAN: Is this a good time to look through it, Mister?

CASPAR: It is a very good time. The atmosphere is clear. No clouds, as you can see.

SCRUB-WOMAN: I often thought I'd look through it. What will I see, Mister?

CASPAR: The Mountains, the Seas, the Volcanoes of the Moon.

(He adjusts the Telescope for her. The Scrub-woman looks through. The other men and women watch her making the observation.)

SECOND REPORTER: Get your question answered and then we'll beat it.

ONE OF THE OTHER HOTEL HELP: (*to Caspar*): Couldn't you do something for the workers, Brother?

CASPAR: I? How could I?

ONE OF THE HELP: Hand them out something—a few words or a leaflet.

CASPAR: What would I do that for?

ONE OF THE HELP: Just to promote the cause. I don't ask you to hand out anything to the rich irresponsibles. But any of the workers that come to you. . .

CASPAR: I'm not a worker. I have only my Telescope.

ONE OF THE HELP: So that's the kind you are. Won't do anything for us? I see exactly the kind you are.

THE SCRUB-WOMAN (*having finished her observation*): I'll look

to-morrow again, sir. It did me good to see what you told me about.

CASPAR: Mountans, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

ONE OF THE HELP: I'll say it should be suppressed. All this science of astronomy is just to make people look away from the world. It's no wonder it's being subsidized by the rich irresponsibles. The whole thing will have to be swept away. Remember what I've told you—you'll be swept away.

CASPAR: Listen. I'm not interfering with anything.

ONE OF THE HELP: You're a reactionary—that's all that's to that.

FOURTH REPORTER: I'll get two to answer my question here—Telescope-operator and Scrub-woman.

(*The Reporters cross to the people around the Telescope.*)

FOURTH REPORTER (*to Scrub-woman*): I represent the Midnight Gazette.

MEN AND WOMEN: Midnight Gazette!

FOURTH REPORTER: I've to get four people to answer a question for me. I'll put it to two of you people here.

A MAN: Will it be in your paper that you asked one of us?

FOURTH REPORTER: It will be in after midnight. (*To Scrub-woman.*) I'll ask you to answer first.

SCRUB-WOMAN (*intently*): Yes, Mister.

FOURTH REPORTER: What do you think of the freedom of the City being given to Cohen Muldoon, the Prize-fighter?

ANOTHER SCRUB-WOMAN: Say, his suite is on the corridor that I work along.

A MAN: She has been telling us that all day.

WOMAN: It is on the corridor I work along.

FOURTH REPORTER: Have you ever seen Cohen Muldoon, the Prize-fighter?

WOMAN: No, Mister. I've never seen him.

FOURTH REPORTER (*to first Scrub-woman*): Well, that's the question.

FIRST SCRUB-WOMAN: Does he get that suite free?

THIRD REPORTER (*ponderously*): It doesn't mean that he gets anything free. It's only an honour. But should a prize-fighter get an honour like that from the city—that's the question.

A MAN (*prompting the Scrub-woman*): It's like electing him to something.

SCRUB-WOMAN (*thoughtfully*): I'd say it was all right.

FOURTH REPORTER: I'll put down what you've said. Scrub-woman in Hotel Daedalus says that public does well in honouring prize-fighter, he, in several ways, representing populace or at least popular feelings.

SCRUB-WOMAN (*gratified*): Yes, Mister. Will I see that in the paper?

FOURTH REPORTER: Yes. Midnight Gazette. Any time after midnight.

CASPAR (*stepping out of the group*): You print questions in your paper, don't you?

REPORTER: Yes, we do.

CASPAR: I'd like you to print a question that I have in my mind.
(*Reporter gets ready to write.*)

CASPAR: Is a man born a hero, or does he become a hero by doing heroic things?

FOURTH REPORTER: I don't get that.

CASPAR: In other words—what is it to be a hero?

FOURTH REPORTER: I still don't get your question.

CASPAR: It's like this: Take the case of the man they have given the freedom of the city to—Cohen Muldoon. Take him as an example of what I mean. He didn't fight because he's a fighter—he's a fighter because he has fought.

FOURTH REPORTER: And what do you want to ask?

CASPAR: What is it to be a hero? Is a man born a hero—or anything remarkable? Or does he become a hero—or anything remarkable—by doing heroic or remarkable things? Take my case . . .

SECOND REPORTER: Oh, he's getting ready to talk about himself.

FIRST REPORTER: There may be a story in it. "Obscure telescope-operator tells of unnoted bravery!" How would that do for a headline? Say, Mister . . .

CASPAR: Yes . . .

FIRST REPORTER: What about it?

CASPAR: What about what?

FIRST REPORTER: Your unnoted bravery. Ever stopped a hold-up hereabouts?

CASPAR: No . . . I can't say that I have.

494 PROLOGUE TO BALLOON: A COMEDY

FIRST REPORTER: Well, what deed of bravery were you talking about then?

CASPAR: I wasn't talking about deeds of bravery I have done. Listen! It's like this . . .

SECOND REPORTER: Can you give us anything on Cohen Muldoon?

CASPAR: No. I mean I don't know him. Take him as an example of what I mean . . .

THIRD REPORTER: No. There's nothing in it. You couldn't put it over.

CASPAR: What I mean is that one can't do anything if the opportunity isn't offered. The bravest and most resolute man might stand on this pavement for years, and if nothing happened here, why he could do nothing to show his courage and resolution. But if something did happen he could do something. And this is what I mean: By just doing it he would become something. A man becomes a hero by doing heroic things. A man becomes remarkable by doing remarkable things.

FOURTH REPORTER: Your picture wouldn't look much.

SECOND REPORTER: Your name wouldn't look anything in a headline.

FIRST REPORTER: Obscure Telescope-owner, we won't have you on the first page in the morning.

CASPAR: You're not going to print my question, then?

FOURTH REPORTER: No. It would only mix people up.

(Reporters go off. Hotel Help go off in other direction.)

SCRUB-WOMAN: It did me good to look through the Telescope and see the mountains and all you told me about. I was nearly forgetting about the sore thumb I have while I was thinking about what I saw. I'll come and look to-morrow.

CASPAR: I'll be here.

SCRUB-WOMAN: Good-night.

CASPAR: Good-night, good-night.

(The Scrub-woman goes off with the others.)

CASPAR *(alone)*: Will I never see my name on the front pages? "Caspar in first plane over South Pole." "Caspar stands on bottom of the Sargasso Sea." Another night! And will this night, too, go by without any opportunity coming to me?

(Redvyn the architect of the Hotel Daedalus and Miss Leila Romerantz, the Motion-picture actress, enter. Redvyn is still

young but looks a man who has great achievements back of him. Miss Romerantz is young and supremely beautiful.)

REDVYN: I say it's only a stunt—a publicity stunt. And why do you want to do it? To have the front page of the newspaper in the morning. But you are not the sort of a Cinema-star that needs that—you're one of the great artists of the films. And, besides, you have more publicity than Napoleon and Balzac together ever had. There are thousands and thousands of representations of you in all places all over the world. I have seen them in villages that are in forests and up rivers and on the edge of deserts. Even the philosophers write about you. One said the other day . . .

ROMERANTZ: What did he say? I may have missed it.

REDVYN: He said that he didn't care if all the pictures that represent womanhood in all the galleries of the world were destroyed if your picture on the screen remained. He talked of your rendering the grace and pride and integrity of youth. And you want to go up in a Balloon to-night!

ROMERANTZ: And I want you to accompany me, Redvyn.

REDVYN: In a Balloon? And drop down by parachute?

ROMERANTZ: You have done more dangerous things than that.

REDVYN: I don't see any danger in it. I'm not going with you this time.

ROMERANTZ: Oh, why not, Redvyn? Don't you like the building I am going up from?

REDVYN: As a matter of fact, I don't, Leila.

ROMERANTZ: Don't what, Redvyn?

REDVYN: I don't like the Hotel Daedalus, as a matter of fact.

ROMERANTZ: But you built the Hotel Daedalus! It's your greatest achievement, Redvyn.

REDVYN: All right. Look at it! And look at the buildings around that are precisely like it. Look at them, I say!

ROMERANTZ: What are you going to tell me about them, O great architect?

REDVYN: Look at them! Can any one be happy in them? Oh, of course, people can dance in the Hotel Daedalus, and have music in the Hotel Daedalus, and have excitement of every kind in the Hotel Daedalus. But can any one be happy in it? Or in any of the buildings around?

ROMERANTZ: I should have thought so—yes.

REDVYN: You wouldn't know, Leila. For, after all, you, too, are one of the Children of Daedalus.

ROMERANTZ: One of the Children of Daedalus! I don't understand you, Redvyn. Who was Daedalus that your Hotel was named for? Tell me! I love to hear you tell things.

REDVYN: He is in Greek Mythology.

ROMERANTZ: I thought so. But place him for me.

REDVYN: He built the palaces for the Kings of Crete. He invented wings for people to fly with. He is the father of all who build great structures and compound the elements, and make plans for the subjugation of the earth.

ROMERANTZ: And the Children of Daedalus?

REDVYN: They are very different from the men and women who had places in the world, and who had memories of places and of other times, and who could be happy in their memories. The Children of Daedalus have nothing they would remember.

ROMERANTZ: And am I one of the Children of Daedalus, Redvyn?

REDVYN: Essentially you are one of the Children of Daedalus, Leila.

ROMERANTZ: And you, Redvyn?

REDVYN: I have built for them, but perhaps I am not really of them.

ROMERANTZ: Ah, but this does not explain at all why you are not making the ascent with me.

REDVYN: Well, I am going to check every impulse in me to go with the Children of Daedalus.

ROMERANTZ: And I, Redvyn? How am I going to fit into this new scheme of life of yours?

REDVYN: Let us go away.

ROMERANTZ: Away where, Redvyn?

REDVYN: To some straggling village—to some place utterly remote from all this. (*He makes a gesture indicating the skyscrapers.*)

CASPAR (*beside his telescope*): Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

ROMERANTZ: And what would we do?

REDVYN: Live! Live! Grow to be wise, grow to be joyful!

ROMERANTZ: It is very strange you should talk like this, Redvyn.
As for growing wise—isn't the great Library over there?

REDVYN: Yes. The great Library is just where we're looking.

ROMERANTZ: And as for being joyful—I'm joyful when I swim
in the mornings in the pool in the Hotel Daedalus. Everything
is in your Hotel Daedalus, Redvyn.

REDVYN: Everything, I suppose, that the Children of Daedalus
want. You won't go away from this?

ROMERANTZ: Oh, I'd love to.

REDVYN: No, you wouldn't. You belong to this place. I know it.

ROMERANTZ: I have to go to the studios to-morrow. There's a
great picture coming on. I'm the central character in it, but
I'm directing it, too. Can't you see that I am building, too? I
am doing something that's making woman ready to enter the
civilization that the great engineers and builders, and men like
you, Redvyn, are making ready for the human race.

CASPAR: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

ROMERANTZ: I know what it is, Redvyn.

REDVYN: You know what what is, Leila?

ROMERANTZ: I know what's affecting you—it's a complex!

REDVYN: A complex—nothing.

ROMERANTZ: A complex that makes you hate what you have
been doing. I don't know what the complex is called, but I
know there's such a one. There's such a good psychoanalyst has
an office in the Hotel Daedalus.

REDVYN: In the Hotel Daedalus?

ROMERANTZ: Everything is in your Hotel Daedalus.

REDVYN: Everything is in the Hotel Daedalus—everything I don't
want—everything I don't want to hear about. I'll not go into it.

ROMERANTZ: Oh, but you must.

REDVYN: I won't. I'll stand here and look at these buildings and
try and find out if human beings can have any happiness in
them.

ROMERANTZ: Come in later. There's plenty of time. If you won't
make the ascent with me, Redvyn, I'll make it alone. I won't
have any one else go with me.

REDVYN: All right, Leila. I'll stay here. Perhaps I'll be here to
see you come down.

ROMERANTZ: Oh, no. Come into the Hotel before I go up. Good-night, Redvyn. You'll see me later.

(Miss Romerantz goes towards Hotel.)

CASPAR: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

REDVYN *(turning to him)*: What did you say?

CASPAR: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas! On the Moon, sir!

REDVYN: What you said chimed in with something I was thinking of. Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas! *(He looks round as if expecting to see them in Megalopolis.)*

CASPAR: Would you like to look through the Telescope? A silver! That is all, sir. *(He takes the money Redvyn gives him.)*

REDVYN *(looking through Telescope)*: How dreadfully near they are—these Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, and Empty Seas!

CASPAR: Not many people think of them as being near, sir.

REDVYN: You, I imagine, have quite a good time here.

CASPAR: In what way, sir?

REDVYN: You have no distractions, and you have an impressive offering for people.

CASPAR: I have something to look at.

REDVYN: Yes. Very impressive.

CASPAR: I mean the Hotel there.

REDVYN: The Hotel? The Hotel Daedalus, do you mean?

CASPAR: Yes. That great Hotel. *(They both turn and look at it.)*

REDVYN: You watch the people going in, I suppose?

CASPAR: It is not that so much. . . . Look there!

REDVYN: The Elevator shaft?

CASPAR: The Elevator is rising. Look! Up, up, and up, it goes!

Who are in the car, do you suppose? Women with soft-furred wraps around them, their faces delicately rouged . . .

REDVYN: Yes. They are in it.

CASPAR: A renowned opera-singer. A diplomat. A famous general. A young girl with pearls around her throat and at her breast a bunch of white violets.

REDVYN: Ah, yes. Quite so.

CASPAR: Oh, sir, the whole of the world is in the Hotel Daedalus!

I watch it, sir, that world! The Elevator stops. Someone gets off to go into a salon where brilliant lustres hang from the ceiling . . .

REDVYN: The Elevator is rising again.

CASPAR: Where do you suppose it stops now?

REDVYN: I happen to know. At the Porphyry Ball-Room.

CASPAR: The Porphyry Ball-Room! I shall remember that. Up, up, up, it goes.

REDVYN: It stops now at the Hall of Palms. And now it rises again.

CASPAR: Where now does it stop?

REDVYN: At the floor of the private suites.

CASPAR: And now it rises, in a beautiful perpendicular, straight up to the Roof Garden.

REDVYN: Do you watch it descend?

CASPAR: Why, no. It just descends.

REDVYN: And so, watching the Elevator shaft, you do not think upon the Mountains, the Extinct Volcanoes, and the Empty Seas, the sight of which you offer to passers-by?

CASPAR: Sometimes I hear the music that comes down from the Roof Garden.

REDVYN: I should like to make you an offer. I should like to stay here for a while. By myself. I should like to look at the Mountains, the Extinct Volcanoes, the Empty Seas, and look from them to the buildings around. Suppose I bought your Telescope?

CASPAR: I don't understand you, sir.

REDVYN: There is no necessity to explain it. I'll buy your Telescope.

CASPAR: But then, sir, I should have nothing to do around here.

REDVYN: You could take a look at the Hotel Daedalus from the other side. (*He hands Caspar notes for five hundred silvers.*)

CASPAR: This is terribly unexpected. I don't know what to do with myself now.

REDVYN: Oh, go into the Hotel.

CASPAR: Go into the Hotel! Go into the Hotel Daedalus! I could not pass the Commissionaire at the door. I could not face the waiters. But I have five hundred silvers. I could go in! A man becomes a hero by doing heroic things. But I wonder if that is true!

REDVYN: I say . . .

CASPAR: Yes?

REDVYN: Do you know what we are doing? I am trying to enter your world.

CASPAR: And I, sir?

REDVYN: You are about to enter my world. Or what I thought was my world.

CASPAR: The Hotel Daedalus.

REDVYN: The Hotel Daedalus.

CASPAR (*with resolution*): Yes, I am going into it—into the Hotel Daedalus.

(He walks towards the Hotel as Redvyn stands at Telescope. There is a more brilliant flash of lights from the Hotel.)

The Scene Closes.

CACTUS

BY PAUL GURK

Translated From the German by Amy Wesselhoeft von Erdberg

I seethe behind these prickly spines,
My skin grown tough in glaring light,
My finger, thorn. . . .
No bird lights here for food.

Dumb as the stones about me I have hid
Behind a monster's mask
While torture, rage,
Gripped my contorted limbs.

Fed from no other source than mine own green
That drew scant moisture from the niggard rifts,
I fling ecstatic fire-blooms, flame on flame. . . .
I need a desert for such flowers as these.



Courtesy of the Galerie Billiet, Paris

A WOMAN. BY MARCEL GIMOND

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MONTAIGNE'S INTENTION

BY JOHN EGLINTON

PLUTARCH founded his biographic method on the observation that nations, in their passage from youth to age, are represented at each stage by men of action, who, in the case of nations more or less contemporary, may be instructively compared. The same parallelism in the men of thought of two such nations is still more striking, and for a Plutarch of the mind, Montaigne and Shakespeare seem to fall together inevitably as the intimate spokesmen of their respective peoples at the point of maturity. One of them is, no doubt, the greatest of poets; the other, less than anything a poet; yet to both of them experience presents the same data, there are the same curiosities, admirations, standards, the same abysmal doubt and the same belief in life. Shakespeare was a princely guest at the banquet of life, whose presence gave words to everybody and left all the world regretting that it would never again have such another guest; Montaigne's entertainment, on the other hand, was a somewhat insistent vein of monologue, interlarded with endless anecdotes out of antiquity, and with revelations of his privacy which caused the company now and then to look down at their plates. Yet these two incomparables had this in common, that in that age of the discovery of the round earth, they had accomplished the circuit of the sphere of human individuality. Superficially, there is the curious distinction between them, that whereas one of them babbles of himself from page to page, the other, though not in the characteristic British manner, observes all too strictly the rule of reticence about himself personally. Yet what do we know better than the mind and soul of Shakespeare? Montaigne, for his part, tells us so much about himself that he sets us to further questioning.

What, in particular, was really at the back of his mind when he resolved to make us acquainted not merely with his character and circumstances, the facts of his curious upbringing, his affection for his father and the four years of his exalted friendship with

Etienne de La Boétie, his taste in books, his impressions of men and affairs, his views on education, his quizzical judgement of the religious reformers and his general Pyrrhonism; but with the meats he liked, the glasses of wine he drank, his digestion and the physiology pertaining thereto, his hours of sleeping and waking, his concupiscences and marital intimacies, the dolours of his painful malady, his lassitudes, laziness, and bad memory—in short, with every detail that could lodge in the mind of his reader the image of Michel de Montaigne, so far as he was known to himself; and to his last hour he was adding new and ever more candid observations. That at some moment a definite design of self-revelation was conceived by him is evident from the manner in which he went over his earlier writings, bringing in by hook or by crook passages about himself. Other men who have yielded to the instinct for self-revelation—St Augustine, Benvenuto Cellini, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Rousseau, Mark Pattison, Tolstoy—have done so with a conviction of something extraordinary either in themselves or in their story; but Montaigne, though there were passages in his life for which he claimed a unique character, appears to have believed himself typical of ordinary human nature. And this brings us perhaps as near as we can come to the main purpose of his *Essays*. Somehow or other he had discovered that he had a natural gift for self-portraiture, and that it amused others as it certainly amused himself; and no doubt the deep fellow knew that his most ingenious reader would look for the thread on which all these revelations were hung and equally with the author would be puzzled to discover whether the true Montaigne was in his virtues or his vices, his brain or his stomach. No doubt also he realized as he went on that without much trouble to himself he had defined a new philosophic attitude, as serviceable an antidote to the ills of his time as could be thought of, as he knew when he wrote: "This idea [the Pyrrhonian doubt] is more surely understood by interrogation: *Que Sçay-je?* which I bear as my motto with the emblem of a pair of scales."

It would probably be an anachronism to attribute to Montaigne a purely artistic impulse. A purpose of some kind he surely had, beyond the only purpose he himself acknowledged, that of beguiling tedium: "I never set my hand to it unless driven by an idleness

that has become unbearable, and nowhere but at home." Probably it would be more accurate to say that a purpose developed itself as he went on, quickening all the seriousness of his nature. We must however take leave to doubt whether this purpose was exactly that attributed to him by Mr John M. Robertson, who contributes an Introduction to Mr E. J. Trechmann's admirable new translation.¹ According to Mr Robertson, Montaigne, a man not merely of a genius transcending that of his age but of a sensitiveness to human suffering which endowed him with some of the attributes of a redeemer, entertained the sense of a lofty mission, and with a view to arresting the ravages of bigotry and intolerance which tormented his contemporaries, conceived the design of infecting men with his own salutary doubt. He was to slay the belief in truth with truth itself, and by making a kind of sacrificial exhibition of himself to show how little fitted is man to achieve spiritual certitude. And Mr Robertson is able to show that if Montaigne really sought to put an end to those evils which he certainly abhorred, he could not have chosen a more effective way of doing so. People who attended to his audacious loquacity were never quite the same again. It is probable that Henri IV, who visited him twice at his castle and desired his presence at court, was a kind of disciple. His influence reached out presently into neighbouring nations, and infected Shakespeare and Bacon. He made the problem of thought different for Descartes and the field of salvation different for Pascal. His mere style—a product of intense and self-conscious application—is a perennial tonic and disinfectant from humbug; beside it, most of the styles in which we poor latter-day penmen try to look a little bigger than we are, appear somewhat shamefaced.

It was a good while before the Church judged it advisable to censure this profoundly influential and certainly anti-Christian thinker: not in fact until well on in the following century, when the *Essays* were placed on the Index, on the ground, it is said, of his crediting animals with reason. A curiously minute point, one cannot help feeling, on which to condemn the author of so

¹ The *Essays* of Montaigne. Translated by E. J. Trechmann. With an Introduction by the Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson. Two volumes. 12mo. 561 and 614 pages. Oxford University Press, American Branch. \$3.

many questionable pages! It would seem to suggest that the Church had found in this belittler of all the efforts of the human mind to achieve spiritual certitude a not unprofitable servant; and a treatise like the *Apology for Raimond Sebond*, in which this particular heresy occurs, might be regarded as an edifying meditation. Montaigne indeed, so far from being the impartial arbiter between the rival religions which Mr Robertson would make him out to be, was all for outward conformity in religious matters, and he had very little patience with the Reformers. He was himself, no doubt, of the religion which a friend describes as still the best religion a man can profess, that of a "bad Catholic". Good-natured and humane as he was, it may be doubted whether true tolerance was a principle which he felt strongly disposed to inculcate. For the principle of tolerance is not merely that one man has as good a right to his opinion as another: it is based on a belief in truth, and on an acceptance of the fact that each man's perception of truth is affected by that of others, and that it is right that this should be so. This tolerance does not preclude intolerance itself, considered as a mental attitude, for is not intolerance a human instinct which we must reckon with? Perhaps after all it is minds like that of Montaigne, without the glow for truth, and for which one belief is as good as another, that so offend the common aspiration for spiritual certitude, that in certain ages, with the general approval of men, the maintenance of the structural beliefs of the ordinary human mind is handed over to authority, civil and spiritual.

Montaigne speaks often enough of his "purpose", and perhaps would be surprised to find that it is now in debate. "In common with the Huguenots, who condemn our auricular and private confession, I confess in public, simply and scrupulously. St. Augustine, Origen and Hippocrates published the errors of their belief; I besides, those of my morals. I am hungering to make myself known; and I care not to how many, provided I do so truly; or, to speak more correctly, I hunger for nothing, but I have a deadly fear of being thought other than I am by those who come to know me by name." A passion for self-communication took hold of him, so that when he woke up in the morning it was to think of something he had not yet told. "I speak the truth, not enough to sat-

isfy myself, but as much as I dare to speak. And I become a little more daring as I grow older". One asks, not what Montaigne intended, but what was the significance of this new instinct which has turned modern literature into a vast confessional. We call him anti-Christian, for he is no believer in a *vita nuova*, the light that dawns upon the sentiment of self-abhorrence. Yet while we deny to him the general design imputed to him by Mr Robertson, we cannot withhold from him, in spite of his own disavowal, our acknowledgement of his immense fundamental seriousness. His self-awareness, the unflinching veracity of his self-examination may be looked upon as a new extension of the functions of conscience, which relaxes not its vigilance from the moment at which we open our eyes upon ourselves in the morning; while we labour, eat, amuse ourselves; to the moment when, relinquishing one by one our contacts with the outer world, we return to the irresponsibility of sleep. We are no longer saints, because we fail to discover in ourselves a single disinterested motive; we no longer pray, for we too deeply suspect ourselves. Certain appearances in the past may have deceived us somewhat, but since Montaigne and Shakespeare instituted the modern inquisition into human nature, we are not likely to be deceived again.

However, we do not believe that human nature does not contain resources undreamed of in Montaigne's philosophy, nor would it have been amiss if he had sometimes felt a little ashamed of himself. Without some capacity for repentance the outfit of our poor human nature is not quite complete. We, who cannot help believing in the progressiveness of human nature, must find his view of a static and uniform personality somewhat of a curiosity. He turned inwards upon himself from a world filled with the beginnings of things of which he had no comprehension. The golden age was for him in the past: golden now because it has shed all the dross of actuality, and survives in the records of the noble men of antiquity.

It is an argument against those who assert that we can only read Montaigne in the original that Shakespeare and his contemporaries understood him well enough through Florio; and Emerson, who read him to such good purpose, depended I suppose on Cotton and Hazlitt. Yet Cotton—not to speak of his frequent inaccuracy—

interposes a quaintness of his own between us and the sufficiently quaint original; and it is not too much to say that Mr Trechmann, with his resolution to defy Dr Bowdler, and with the immense superiority of the modern translations he has chosen of the multitudinous quotations, has opened up Montaigne for the first time in all his intimacy to English readers. He has discharged a really important, perhaps a momentous literary service.

DRIVEN

BY PAUL SMITH

If some fierce shock would clear my mind
Of consciousness of what I am—
A creature clinging to the sham
Protective shell of human kind—

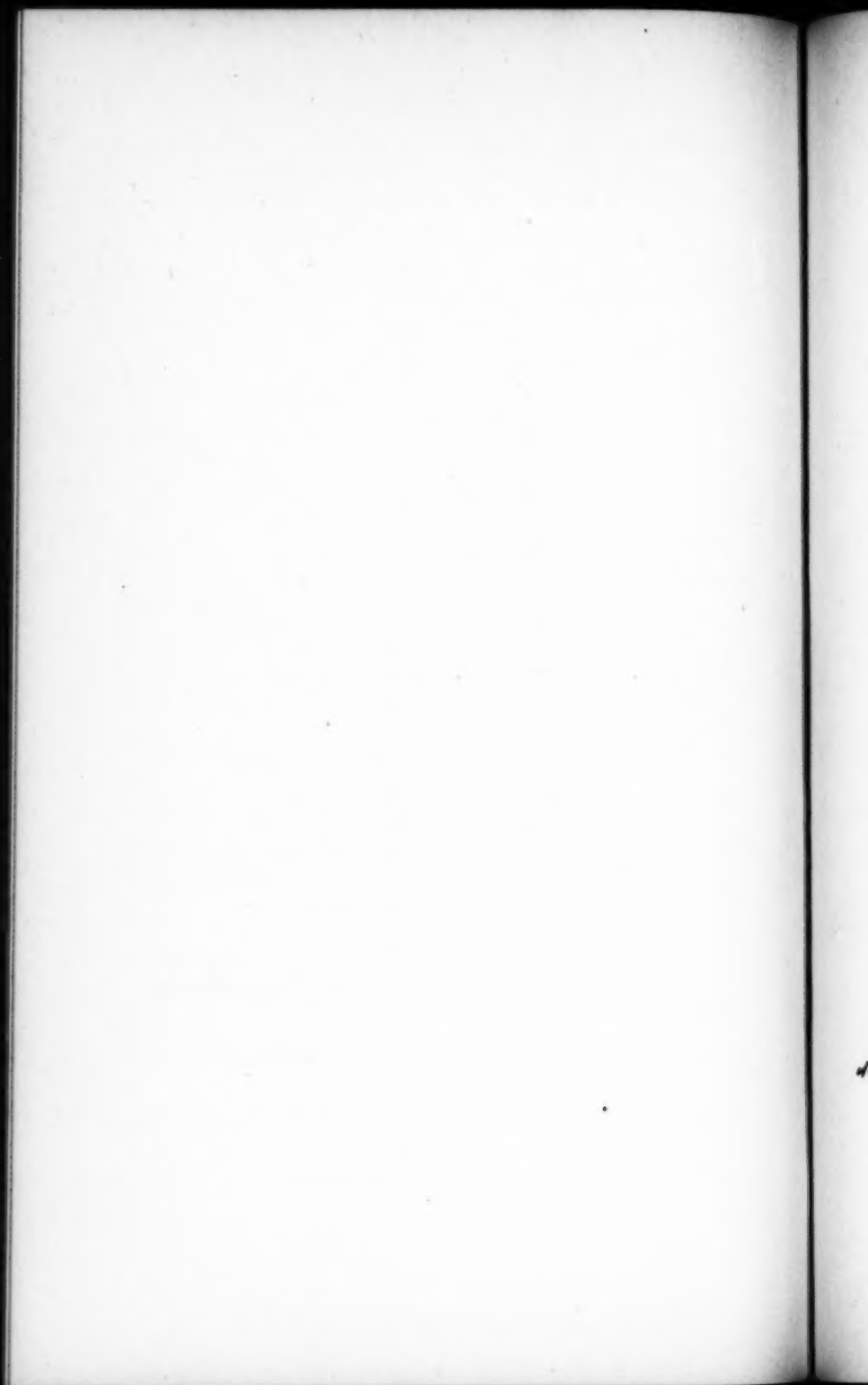
I think I could be satisfied
To feel the moment's beauty pass,
To see the ripples in the grass
To watch the slow ascending tide.

I know a storm-bent tree where I
Might lie for hours, unsurfeited,
Hearing the wind move overhead,
Watching the leaves against the sky.

But being what I am, I stay
At work upon my monument—
My days are few and quickly spent.

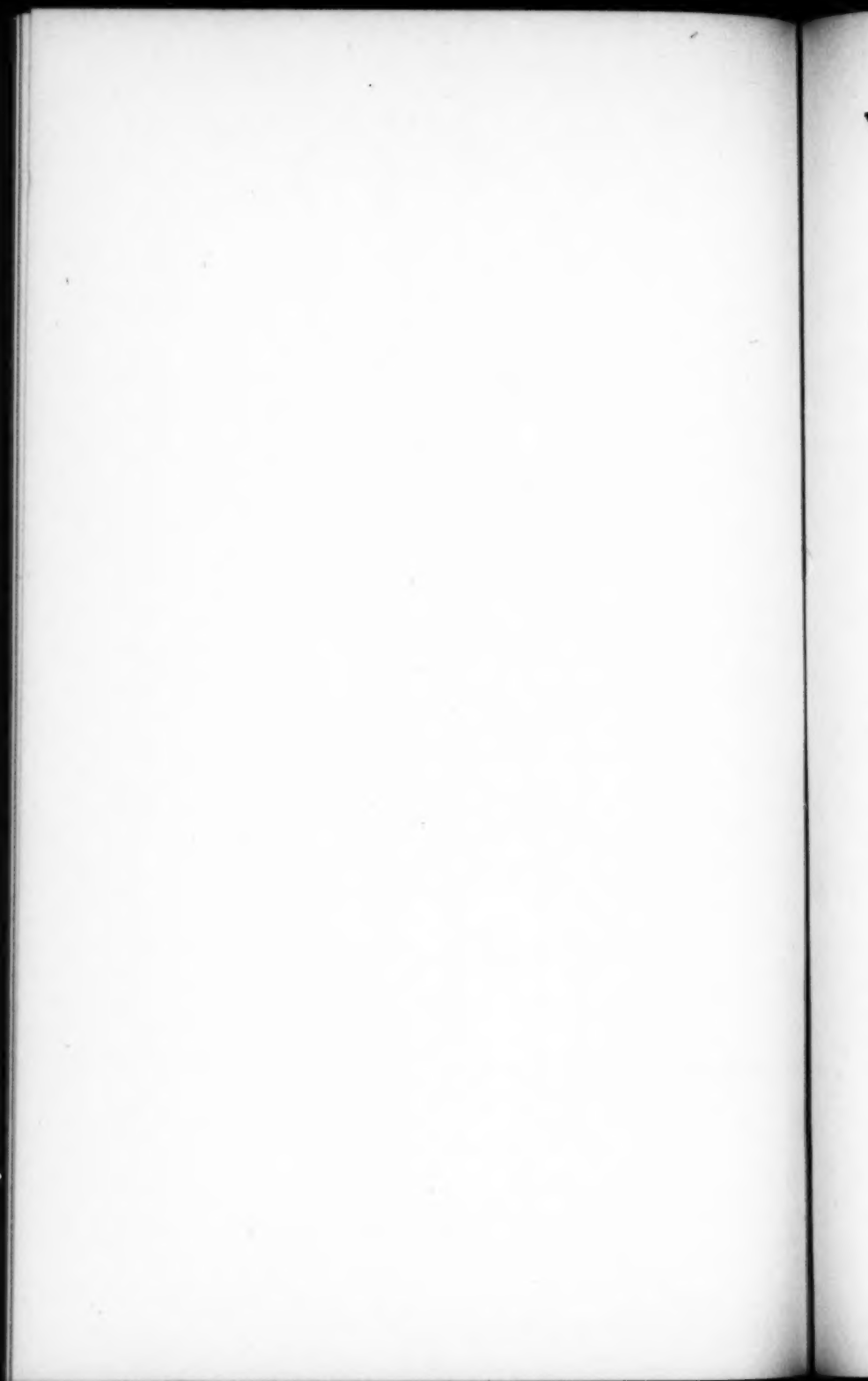


A DRAWING. BY A. WALKOWITZ





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PARIS LETTER

November, 1928

DURING 1928 the two last volumes of Proust have appeared. The work is now finished in the unusual sense of being complete. *La Recherche du Temps Perdu* becomes triumphally *Le Temps Retrouvé*. His task accomplished, Proust died as do the plants, after having borne their fruit; or rather like those magicians, who are struck down as they pronounce the last of the incantations which put them on a level with the gods. This new Faust had discovered the superhuman secret of eluding the march of time and the lie of apparent reality; having through his artistic creation penetrated into the extra-temporal, he there forfeited his life.

Le Temps Retrouvé is indispensable to any one seeking the key to Proust's work. A great German critic, Ernst Robert Curtius, was able to do without it, but he is the only one. Pondering with love and respect over the first six volumes, sifting them with the nicest discrimination, he successfully abstracted the essence of the work and forecast its outline without awaiting its conclusion. Read his *Essay on Marcel Proust*, in which so many mistaken judgements of other critics, incomplete, and by that fact disparaging, are refuted and set right. To us, who in Proust loved the man and exalted the writer to the rank of the greatest, what a satisfaction and joy to find him at last perfectly understood!

Curtius devotes much space to stressing the spirituality of Proust's work. That immateriality pervaded his whole being. Always wrapped in a heavy otter-skin, which, inconsistently, he did not quit until about to go out, submerged in a deep fauteuil from which issued his never-to-be-forgotten phantom's voice, satiric yet kindly, his whole being seemed concentrated in his eyes, extraordinarily large, cavernous, and brilliant. He would talk at great length without seeming to listen to our objections or our replies; but presently as he talked a reference revealed that he had heard all and understood to the point of carrying our idea far beyond what we would have dared express. Even over the telephone his divination of our most secret *arrière-pensées* filled us with admiration and

despair. He seemed at once too delicate a being to endure the truth and too omniscient to overlook it. Commerce with him, always delightful, was never without hazard; for the slightest nuance rent his soul and brought long letters of affectionate and pained reproach, letters precisely like his conversation, and similarly mingled with irony, amusing anecdotes, and profound deductions. It has been said many times that he made the night his day. At nightfall he would mingle with human beings; restricted in the domain of action, but enormous when one considers what he brought back from his brief exchanges with mankind. Proust had become so accustomed to this transposition of night and day—even to the point of extending it to the lives of other people—that on one occasion during the war, on being summoned to appear at two o'clock before an Examining Board, he arrived there with entire candour at two in the morning. Another time, wishing to show a Rembrandt to a friend, he appeared at the doors of the Louvre at midnight. Incredible as it may seem, he was allowed to enter; for the all-powerful charm of that strange being penetrated the most mediocre and soul-less of men.

He was able to obtain for others anything he desired. I remember meeting him one evening in 1916 at the Larue restaurant and presenting him to my companion, who found favour in his eyes. He wanted to offer her the diversion of music in the deserted restaurant—whose personnel were, as everywhere, devoted to him—and proposed, in spite of war regulations, to bring the Poulet Quartet there and then. Off he went into the night to assemble his musicians. We finally became tired waiting, and sceptical of his success, had returned to the hotel, when he presently reappeared, having torn from their beds the first violin, the second violin, and the viola; the violoncellist alone failed him, and with some reason—he had pneumonia.

In spite of his infirmity Proust quailed before no fatigue, no danger. We were chatting one evening in the Ritz, when suddenly the window-panes burst with a terrific crash into a thousand pieces; two German bombs had fallen within ten yards of the hotel. "Charming," said Proust, annoyed at the interruption, and hardly raising his eyes, continued his sentence amid the detonations. His body—scarcely of the earth, arrayed in black and white like a Manet dandy, seemed proof against mere physical attack. But within himself lurked the only menace: Time leading on to death—his only happiness, artistic creation.

Time—in its popular conception—that unyielding Time measurable as is Space, barren and abstract like it, within which we are accustomed to chronologize our artificial and lifeless recollections—is no more than a meaningless void, which Proust traverses at a bound, to make contact with the real Time, actual duration and spiritual reality, of which through ten volumes he relates the marvels and the imperfections. Here are unfolded without regard to time classification, those experiences and aberrations of mankind—which no one has more profoundly analysed—exposed in their essential untruth and unregenerate relativity: love, friendship, ambition, snobism, social intercourse, conflicts of individuals and peoples.

This true Time Proust makes infinitely fluid, now arresting and now precipitating its flow; at the same moment we are in 1914, in 1918, and twenty years before or after. The artist affects ubiquity in Time the better to encircle that enemy; certain characters (Gilberte) have no more substance than a line-drawing and are only present to measure the rise or the decline of a family; others expand in this fourth dimension of Proust's, and "as if mounted upon living stilts, tower up and up."

Time, Time is the principal personage in the work. Proust first in the history of literatures introduces this essential factor of mutations and destinies, turning upon it the blazing flood-light of his genius. Up to now human intellect had created unvarying types of men and super-men, homogeneous, ever uniform from birth to death. Ulysses was astute, Othello jealous, Don Quixote generous, Tartuffe a hypocrite. Balzac has painted a vast fresco but an immobile one. The age of the film, however, has superseded that of the panorama. Proust's work is above all things dynamic: Time has entered into it; these men, these women, this world of people he compounds and pours into his own moulds, fusing together, breaking apart, destroying, altering until unrecognizable, and transforming into their opposites. Compare the Charlus of the beginning with Charlus of the end, the Saint-Loup, Rachel's lover, with Saint-Loup emerging from the disreputable abode of Jupien, the successive manifestations of snobism on the part of the Duchess of Guermantes and of Legrandin. I do not mean that before Proust no one had described a great lord falling into the lowest depths, nor an obscure adventurer rising to the highest peak of honour; but no one had proposed as theme the action of Time nor had developed this theme with such profundity, truth-

fulness, and profusion. Read in the second volume of *Le Temps Retrouvé* the astonishing description of a ball which the author attends after twenty years of voluntary seclusion, and where he encounters former acquaintances, so changed that he at first thinks them disguised and considers that he has come upon a *bal de têtes*. From the truism that men grow old with the passing of days, he evolves reflections of a bitter and terrifying beauty; and he concludes with this sentence of prime importance: "I shall not fail to mark my work with the seal of that Time whose image obsesses me with such power, and I shall describe men—even though it make them monstrous creatures—as occupying in Time a place much more important than that so restricted one reserved to them in Space; a place prolonged eternally, since like giants submerged in the years, they live simultaneously through epochs so far separate one from the other."

This Time which is the object of his meditations, which he dreads and whose thrusts he parries, numbed by the fear of succumbing to them before his task is accomplished, Proust nevertheless overcame through the miracle of his artistic creation. The force which set loose in him this creation was the spontaneous reappearance of the past (so different from the studied act of memory which registers only barren events stripped of their emotional richness). The past is our Rheingold, the treasure hidden in the depths of our being. "Genius," said Baudelaire, quoted by Curtius, "is only childhood recalled at will." These powerful recollections of childhood and youth, the least of which shatters the false edifice we have built up and re-creates the true world around us, are the paradise lost which the artist must regain. The reader will excuse the long citations which follow; they are necessary. The author in them asks himself why, at different moments in his life apparently insignificant sensations (of an uneven pavement, the taste of a madeleine, the tinkling of a spoon against a plate) had suddenly aroused in him an incomprehensible felicity, which rendered death of no account and removed overwhelming doubts, even to the point of reassuring him completely as to the reality of literary gifts which he had begun to mistrust.

"The entrancing image hovered dimly at the threshold of my vision, as if to say, 'Seize me before my outline fades if thou canst, and essay to resolve the enigma of felicity which I propound.' I was imperiously drawn to search the causes of that rapture, of the

indubitable assurance with which it imposed itself. But that cause I divined, as I compared one with the other, these divers blessed experiences having this in common, that I lived them at once in the present and in a moment far distant—the tinkling of the spoon on the plate possessing the power of merging the past with the present. In reality the being which experienced in me that impression existed only when, at the coalescence of present and past it would find itself in the only realm where it could exist and enjoy the essence of reality, that is to say beyond the bounds of Time. That being alone had the power of restoring the past to me, the lost past before which the straining of my memory and of my intellect forever failed.” . . . “It finds in the essence of things its sole subsistence, its sole delight. It languishes in the contemplation of the present in which the senses cannot provide that essence, in the retrospect of a past from which the life has been drained, and in the prospect of a future built up by the will from fragments of the present and of the past, these too bereft of reality, retaining from such fragments only that which corresponds to the will’s utilitarian and narrowly human purpose. But let a sound, an odour, once heard or breathed, return again, existing now in the present and in the past, real without being of the moment, ideal yet not abstract, and immediately the permanent and habitually hidden essence of things is released and our true self (which often had seemed long dead but was ready to spring to life) awakes and flourishes upon the celestial food afforded it. One moment set free from the rule of Time has re-created the man in us, himself released from Time’s grasp in order to perceive it. And one can comprehend that such a man be untroubled in his joy—even though the simple taste of a madeleine does not seem to hold logically in itself the cause of that joy—and that the word death no longer has meaning for him: existing beyond Time what could he fear from the future?” . . . “But even this vision of eternity was transient. The only means of experiencing further these impressions was to attempt to comprehend them more completely where they were found, that is to say within myself. I recalled that obscure impressions had sometimes attracted my thought in the same manner as had these reminiscences, but hid within themselves, not former experience but a new verity which . . . I essayed to adduce by the same sort of effort exerted in an essay of memory—as if our most sublime reflections were like melodies which would return to our consciousness without our having ever heard them before. I recalled that I used to fix

earnestly in my mind some image which had thrust itself on my attention, a cloud, a triangle, a flower, feeling that there was perhaps beneath these signs a thought which they represented, just as hieroglyphics represented more than the material objects they reproduced. Certainly the interpretation of these signs was difficult but by that alone might a measure of truth be apprehended. The truths that the intelligence receives directly from every-day experience, retain a something less profound, less necessary than those which life has communicated to us in spite of our resistance. Hence the necessity of interpreting sensations as signs of so many laws or ideas, essaying to call forth from the penumbra that which I had experienced and to convert it into its spiritual equivalent. And this—was it anything less than a work of art?"

Released from the domination of Time—since he could escape it by involuntary recollection and live simultaneously in the past and the present—Proust attains within himself the only extra-temporal and divine reality, and makes contact with Being. In this sense he vanquished death, and we can say that his creative joy is a religious one.

And yet Mauriac has said that God is not found in Proust's work. It would be more just to say that Christ and the Christian morality are not found there. Curtius has already remarked that the will plays no part in Proust as contrasted with Balzac's work in which it is always present, that his characters do not act of themselves, do not need to act, since they are already rich and complete, or else do evil, vulgarly and maliciously—people like Verdurin, for example, or Bloch, or Charlus. We might add this: what is absent in Proust is the Moral Will. Not one of his characters consults his conscience, nor attempts to prevail against his instincts, to reform, to strive towards an ideal.

In fact, nothing is more foreign to puritanism than the work of Proust, and in this respect we can marvel that it has been received with such enthusiasm by the great Protestant peoples, who as a general thing require of literature moral lessons. They are therefore to be felicitated that in Proust's case truth has been preferred, and the high artistic purpose so sublimely expressed in the death of Bergotte, of whom Proust, alas, was shortly to be the heroic counterpart when writing the last pages of his book a few moments before his death.

PAUL MORAND

BOOK REVIEWS

CARAVAN TWO

THE SECOND AMERICAN CARAVAN. *Edited by Alfred Kreymborg, Lewis Mumford, and Paul Rosenfeld.*
8vo. 872 pages. The Macaulay Company. \$5.

THE bulk, range, and variety of this second year-book, in my hands for review with only a few days for reading it and thinking about it, compel a frankness outside the range of criticism. Because the book is important and one wants to review it promptly, one cannot do justice—to the writers, the editors, and to those who may be guided by this report.

I have, therefore, chosen to disregard almost all of the better-known writers represented here, assuming that readers of THE DIAL are acquainted with the virtues of H. D., Waldo Frank, Edna Bryner, Conrad Aiken, Wallace Gould, Sherwood Anderson, Hart Crane, John Gould Fletcher, Robert Frost, William Carlos Williams, and perhaps a dozen more. In the years between 1920 and the first issue of the American Caravan these artists have appeared frequently enough in THE DIAL. I have never felt them to be in any sense "a DIAL group" (although I have heard that such a group existed) and I know that another list of writers equally familiar to DIAL readers would reveal aesthetic tendencies not followed by some, or all, of those I have named. Yet the Caravan, in part, is a year-book decidedly sympathetic to THE DIAL's standards. And if I omit consideration of these fine and significant artists I do injustice to the Caravan as a readable, interesting, and important book. Their contributions seem to me by far the more interesting; the work of new and lesser known men is nowhere near theirs in thought and feeling and mastery of expression.

But I think that this enforced exclusion does not work a great injustice to the Caravan as an idea. For the editors say that it is "a continued witness of the health of our literature, an earnest of a growing solidarity among American artists, and an emblem of a

new understanding between a group of significant writers and a body of readers who reject the standardized, the derivative, and the anemic literature still widely accepted. In its catholic bringing together of many writers and forms and varieties of spiritual experience *The Second American Caravan* furthers the expression of a 'large, lusty, loving' America."

This, I think, specifically alludes to the relation between new writers and old. Merely to bring together the people I have mentioned above would be to create an anthology. To set new writers into juxtaposition with old, new forms with old, creates this solidarity which the Caravan calls for.

In one sense, solidarity exists. When I reviewed the first Caravan I suspected that a number of American writers, although invited as all American writers are, to contribute, had not done so because they felt that the editors of the Caravan would not be hospitable to their work. And I thought that the range of the first issue, although not great, would suffice to dispel that idea and that writers not particularly sympathetic with the aesthetic religion of the editors would accept the statement that "the American Caravan does not conform to any preconceived pattern . . . the editors are as hospitable . . . to the American of vast corporate organizations as . . . to that of the solitary studio." I was mistaken. The new Caravan still lies within narrow limits. The poetry shows variations of technique and of temper, and constitutes the most interesting part of the book; the prose, which makes up the bulk, might all have been written by two or three people under the influence of two or three others. (I remind you that I am writing particularly of the less known contributors.)

It happens that the major influence wearies me. I cannot give it a personal name because I feel sure that it does not stem from Dreiser so much as from the aesthetes of the Dreiserian mode. It is easily distinguishable. It chooses drab and unimportant things for subject and following a perverted aesthetic theory says nothing interesting about them. It makes a virtue of a dull and repetitious style and asserts that life is dull by making an artistic report of life even duller. It is "strong" because it avoids current sentimentalism, but it is developing a sentimentality of its own, largely about the obligatory meaninglessness of life and the worthlessness of art. These (and any other) theories are relatively unimportant

in a man of profound feeling and great creative energy; whatever I feel about the ideas of Ernest Hemingway and E. E. Cummings, for example, makes me think that they are artists in spite of themselves. But writers of feeble powers cannot afford to accept the ideas or the style of others.

John Herrmann's *Engagement*, taking up nearly a hundred pages of the second *Caravan*, is in part derivative, in part wilful, and altogether spoiled. Episodes are introduced and then carefully turned away from the narrative, as if the author said, "I could have used this for purposes of plot, but I didn't, just to show you that plot is not important." Heaven knows it isn't except when it carries on character or develops a theme; but thumbing one's nose at it is worse than unimportant; it is deadly to interest. Morley Callaghan's story, *An Autumn Penitent*, has a more definite skeleton, but seems also to favour the idea of representing chaos by being chaotic. Another section of the prose is devoted not to the objective rendering of details in the lives of inexpressive people, but to variations of the interior monologue. It arrives sometimes at intensity, sometimes at weariness. The way in which most of these writers avoid dialogue is extraordinary and illuminating. When Mr Callaghan's characters are created, they talk; in most of the other pieces, nothing so direct, nothing requiring so specific an effort at creation is attempted. The characters do not detach themselves for a moment from the background of prose, they can neither gesture nor speak. Mr Rascoe's Gustibus speaks to himself at considerable length, to be sure; what he says is lewd and entertaining; but he says it in the too familiar tones of Mr Bloom. The two pages of conversation to which Josephine Herbst leads us after some eight pages of effort to make her characters far less interesting than they probably were at their conception, is the sort of thing appropriately noted down behind the backs of bus-riders and theatre-lobby conversationalists. And so with far too many others.

The sense of small lives has been presented in various ways: humorously by Mr Lardner, for instance; glamorously by Mr Fitzgerald; poignantly by Chekhov; epically and dully by Dreiser, epically and with true or false intensity by Arnold Bennett. The Paris school of American writers savagely insists that it shall be presented in one way only—stupidly. I suspect that nine of ten among these writers do not know small lives at all and would be

better occupied writing about the small lives of literary people whom, at least, they have observed. By this time what they say of carpenters and ditch-diggers fails to convince me in the slightest.

And I confess to wishing that a few American writers would school themselves with Benda (or perhaps with Wyndham Lewis) and with Aristotle, would purify their emotions by the simple process of making them their own, and would find a little place for structure, for the old despised brainwork of creative activity.

And now let me say that half a dozen of the older writers are not only as interesting as ever; they seem to be growing in power. They, and not the newcomers, are the hope of the Caravan; and what I would like to see is a Caravan with them and with something of the side of America the Caravan has not yet touched: its lightness, its folly, its splendour, spurious and real. I need not nominate my special pets: where are Thomas Beer and Dos Passos and Mencken (or the best of his followers)? The Caravan solicits material without prejudice; but if the editors want to do their job they will have to learn what every magazine editor learns: you cannot be satisfied with what comes in as the result of a general appeal for contributions. You have to know what you want and go and get it.

I hesitate to add a word about criticism. Last year I meditated a bit on the absence of critical work from the Caravan and was rapped over the knuckles for it with a "thank the Lord the critics are no longer influential." The two critical pieces in this number are both remarkable; but more remarkable to me is the absence of any critical survey of the very movement in American literature which the Caravan represents. It is a work not to be done in reviews of the book; and (becoming constructive) I suggest to the editors that for the next Caravan they find a critic to discuss the aesthetics of the first two.

GILBERT SELDES

UNDERWORLDLING

DOSTOEVSKY. *The Man and His Work.* By Julius Meier-Graefe. Translated from the German by Herbert H. Marks. 8vo. 406 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$5.

THAT Mr Meier-Graefe should give us a vividly impressionistic and sympathetic literary portrait of Dostoevsky was only to be expected. He has, as his study of Van Gogh made clear, a natural sympathy with the "rebel" artist, the breaker of moulds, the explorer of chaos. And he loses no time, in this turbulent and excited eulogy of the great Russian poet, in putting this view of his hero sharply before us. He follows, in this regard, the lead of Hermann Hesse, whose *Blick ins Chaos*, a few years ago, endeavoured to crystallize the current Dostoevsky cult and to bring it into relation with the perhaps too-much-talked-about "post-war" chaos—social, ethical, aesthetic, and religious. "Dostoevsky"—says Mr Meier-Graefe—"neither considered literature in any way the reflex of an inner harmony, nor sought to bestow harmony by means of it. . . . The aim of his creation was unrest from which others fled. And he knew what he was doing. To none of the great visionaries has the task been clearer. . . . To no one has it come more naturally to turn the spirit of unrest to account in literature, unambiguously and without any element of vagueness." And again, ". . . he employed existing methods more profoundly than had hitherto been done, in order to attain a more forceful characterization of the developing human type . . . he possessed the faculty of 'having a presentiment of the future man,' possessed it to a degree bordering on the mystical . . ."

This strikes the key of Mr Meier-Graefe's book; and to the extent with which we sympathize with this view of Dostoevsky we can read it with profit and pleasure. The long analyses of the successive novels—copious, ejaculatory, symbolical, and presented with a good deal of the hysterical speed of the novels themselves—are excellent. To read them is in a sense to read the novels again,

and with an enhanced understanding. Mr Meier-Graefe is not blind to the many and grave technical flaws which mar even the greatest of them. He apologizes for the fact that they border, often too closely, on "journalism": he connects this acknowledged weakness—and its concomitants of claptrap melodrama, coincidence, sensationalism, vulgarity—with Dostoevsky's unwillingness to seek "harmony" through literature or to regard it as a "reflex" of harmony. Literature—he suggests—was not for Dostoevsky an aesthetic affair: it was a form of mystical communion; an effort to understand; an exploration of consciousness. Everything else could go by the board. The aesthete, and aesthetic judgement, was to be outlawed: divination was to be the thing. And if in consequence there was to be a breakdown of literature as "art"—as Mr Meier-Graefe seems to think likely—so much the better for mankind and so much the worse for our present conception of "art."

We need not, of course, take too seriously this prognostication as to the future of literature. We are free to suspect, if we like, that in this regard Mr Meier-Graefe errs as Mr Hesse did before him: on the far side of idolatry. Dostoevsky was a genius of the first order, one of those rare people who actually do extend the sphere of man's consciousness at a given moment, who serve as its advancing fringe, and who in that sense become "seers." But need this prevent our attempt at an understanding, in cold psychological terms, of the dynamics behind this phenomenon? To be downright, we cannot avoid scrutinizing the fact that Dostoevsky was an epileptic, with all that this must imply. Epileptics, as we can discover from any medical treatise, are predisposed to an excessive sensibility, and to the kind of excessively bright consciousness which such a sensibility will almost inevitably determine. They are terribly and feverishly aware. They are raw souls. But they are also profoundly unstable—they are inclined to substitute feeling for thought, and to be absolutely at the mercy of what it is that they happen to feel for the moment. Dostoevsky is an almost classical example of exactly this. If we go through his letters with any care, we find him to be an emotional weathercock. What he thinks to-day he will deny to-morrow. What one day he worships or praises, he will execrate the next. He has not, apparently, the least understanding of why it

is, at a given moment, that he feels or thinks a given thing. That he feels profoundly, *realizes* with an intensity almost unmatched, makes no difference. We can grant this virtue, grant the magnificent poetic genius; but we must be on our guard against accepting too whole-heartedly the notion that Dostoevsky was a great prophet, one who was deliberately leading human nature out of the wilderness.

Mr Meier-Graefe is in this respect to be mistrusted. He pays far too little attention to his hero's utter unreliability: he would have it that Dostoevsky always "knew what he was doing." In a sense, Dostoevsky always remained an "underworldling" of the sort which he made so extraordinarily real and terrifying in *Letters From the Underworld*: a creature alternately paralysed and galvanized by an unanalysed sense of guilt. "I am a sick man—I am a vile man," Dostoevsky began this book; and if with this abject humility went also the usual concomitant (in the epileptic) of mystic exaltation or satanic pride, it is nevertheless true that these alternations constituted a decidedly abnormal mental condition from which all his life he was never to escape.

CONRAD AIKEN

MR MORE'S DEMONOLOGY

THE DEMON OF THE ABSOLUTE. New Shelburne Essays, Volume I. By Paul Elmer More. 12mo. 183 pages. Princeton University Press. \$2.50.

ONE might wish, in view of the particular moment of Mr More's appearance in the more active salients of American criticism, that it were somewhat less dispersed with respect to his stated purposes. In his preface he declares an intention to confront with his own practice the much iterated charge that the older critics are too cloistered and aloof in their critical vocations, that their criticism is "irrelevant." Suiting this determination he sets down first his vigorous *Demon of the Absolute*, an essay surely which is nothing if not apt to the moment; and next, *Modern Currents in American Literature*, which if less forcible than its predecessor, is no less contemporary, and certainly is not without its own trenchancies of disposal. On the other hand rather more than the latter half of the volume is occupied with substantial but scarcely contemporaneous pieces on Vaughn, Trollope, Poe, and Borrow, and also a short translation from the *Mahābhārata*.

In more than one sense probably it need not be a concern to Mr More or to Shelburnians to prove that he is relevant. To reflect on the substantial sum of plain-dealing which, in the first Shelburne essays, directly or implicitly touches various currently received notions, is scarcely to be persuaded that Mr More is irrelevant. Specific pronouncements on all twentieth-century concerns might not always be available in his uttered thought, but will it do to say that the outlines of them are not to be found there? Mr More does, however, take note of the charge that he is "obstinately" aloof. He takes note of it not merely in a prefatory declaration but by sending forth two essays in contemporary criticism one of which at least seems equal in armament and power of fire to any of his prior launchings. There is a definiteness in such actions which perhaps justifies the expectation that he will have more to say of our current character and being in subsequent volumes. Certainly it justifies the wish that he had said more in his present one.

It is primarily to the initial essay, *The Demon of the Absolute*,

that the reader must turn to find Mr More's contemplation of what the twentieth century thinks and is, an essay in many ways which finds us where we live. Mr More is no non-combatant critic, and his attack upon the Demon, "the Deluder who can take many forms, but who for us appears as the idol of Nature set high on the throne of omnipotence," is one of those excursions into the camp and country of the enemy which ought for their very courage and enterprise to win admiration, certainly to render obsolete the epithet "irrelevant."

"You can see the Demon," says Mr More, "at work in politics whenever men begin to contend for some final unchecked authority in the state, whether it be lodged in a monarch or in all the people. It has wrought havoc in religion by presenting to faith the alternative between an absolute omnipotent God or no God at all, and between an infallible church or undisciplined individualism. But nowhere has it produced more stupid contrariety than among the critics of art and literature."

This is not mincing words. Yet Mr More's still further aggressive by involution of tactics, must seem to some readers as not of the best counsel. The situation surely is not quite as it was in the days when, as he tells us, Mr More was compared by his adversaries to the poisoners of Socrates. He has withstood siege, and the contest is again in open country. Yet still he resorts to what must seem mainly defensive practices. It is a little strange that in so vigilant a piece as *The Demon of the Absolute* only the latter two sections are pure attack, are Mr More's unmistakable demonology. The three preceding are mainly, if not wholly defence, a defence such as Mr More has made before, of standards and tradition.

It is a spirited defence, but suggests question with regard to a defect at least of emphasis in the general attitude which it implies. Are standards and tradition sufficiently defended simply by defending them, by discoursing merely of the necessity of standards and tradition? One readily enough agrees with Mr More, who here agrees with his adversaries, that a chief office of the critic is to assist in creating a general body of ideas in which the artist—and, one might add, the artist's audience—could live and grow. And no American critics, surely, have been better able than Mr More and Mr Babbitt to insist, or have better insisted, on

the importance of the far view in those who would create or live in such a body of ideas. They have both resolutely maintained our need to hew to the line of the best recorded thought of men.

Yet one must demur if it is their opinion, as they sometimes seem to imply, that simple adherence to the traditions of the best is alone the necessary qualification of the critic or the adequate condition of intellectual and spiritual completion. They have done immensely well, no doubt, to examine and measure in the light the great traditions, and not seldom to reject many of the notions we currently have held most high. But this does not change the fact that there can be emergent and valid novelty, that there are discoveries which will ultimately be assimilated by tradition, not as yet perhaps in immediately apparent harmony with it. Such passages seem to require in the critic something besides adherence, however fine and deep, to the traditions of the best.

With the critic, and indeed with everyone, as Mr More here and elsewhere holds, the protective humility of common sense is of course a desideratum, and so is original feeling. But more than these because perhaps including these, imagination is imperative, the imagination to live out of one's time, admittedly, but equally the imagination to live in it. The critic is not the keeper of a museum, but the active reconciler of old and new, for if the old lives, it lives in living minds. The spirits of the great and the fine are quintessential, and to know them one must give them at least some being in oneself.

Inevitably there must seem a deep-reaching mutuality between the parts of any such feat, a mutuality requiring imagination for its guarantee, not inventive imagination indeed, but the no less vital sort involved in being able to establish the spirit of tradition in one's contemporary context. If in such a clothing of ghosts with flesh the new is only the formed body and not the forming spirit, one has still to recollect that body is essential to spirit in an animate world. Mr More very profitably suggests that the enduring things are old because they are good, not good because they are old, but if one ask the obvious question, "good for what?" then the obvious answer, "good for life," points perhaps at the need for that capacity to make distinctions on which Mr More and Mr Babbitt have often insisted. Literature and art are after all an aid to life, not life an aid to literature and art.

He can lose his own meaning who exaggerates respect for the old at the expense of his life in himself. Whoever does not receive the classic into his imagination—and imagination is nourished in the first instance only by a sufficient commerce with one's own world—will perhaps not know the classic.

Possibly this is all obvious or all implicit in the position of Mr More and the older criticism in general, or perhaps on the other hand it will be said that in our romantic-naturalistic expansiveness we already have too much imagination, and really need a check upon it, as Mr More so tellingly insists that we need a check on our over-running demons of rationalism. Assent to either of these opinions, however, would be difficult. If all this were obvious in the positions of the exponents of judgement and the advocates of tradition, ought we to fall so often as we do into the sterile emptiness of pseudo-classicism? To such a misadventure the official custodians of the classic seem particularly liable, and what is it if not a failure in imagination? To read the traditions of the best *au pied de la lettre*, is not this to become deep-versed in books and shallow in oneself? Are we to be especially surprised that youth revolts from such tuitions, youth which in a sense is the time of the imagination, when that great fountain of renewal is first coming into free play? As to the claim that we have already had too much imagination, one is even less disposed to allow it. What we have had may very well be too little of the inner veto of which Mr Babbitt has so much spoken, but certainly not too much imagination, unless one takes imagination in the sense of mere expansionism, which is not a just reading of the word.

One does not suppose Mr More lacking in imagination. It is because he is not lacking in it and yet is also a pre-eminent exponent of judgement that his decided advent into the more current sessions of criticism is welcome. It is because he is not lacking in it that readers who assent to his reassertion of the traditions of the best, who can sympathize with his indignation at the neglect of those traditions, who can applaud his peremptory overhauling of modern demons in the midst of their depredations, may yet wish to object to being left, at the end of it all, with imaginations still unsatisfied. One can very well wish to avoid the mechanistic inane, and at the same time not be anxious to sink into the dusty void of the pseudo-classical.

CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

ENGLISH PROSE STYLE

ENGLISH PROSE STYLE. *By Herbert Read. Demy 8vo. 227 pages. London: G. Bell and Sons. 9s.*

TO defend the present by attacking the past, or the past by attacking the present, neither way is Mr Herbert Read's way of enjoying English prose. He is not a partisan of tradition, not a partisan of up-to-dateness, not any kind of sectary. No conventional deference to this time or to that dictates his likings, nor any conventional revolt. He belongs in this respect among the newer, the more modern moderns.

Every century, to the taste of this young English scholar, has its great writers. The seventeenth: Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations* "is throughout written in a sweetly modulated rhythm which has no parallel in English prose." The eighteenth: Swift's narrative style "is the norm to which we must return again and again." The nineteenth: "Clear explanations, acute distinctions, the invention of descriptive phrases, perfect definitions—these are but the minor characteristics of such a style" as Sir Henry Maine's in his *Ancient Law*, "a book in which the quality of an expository style is seen in its perfection." The twentieth: A passage quoted from Vanzetti's speech in Judge Webster Thayer's court "has all the elements of great prose. . . . The rhythm mounts in a tempo as triumphant as the mood it expresses; the simplicity and pathos of the words do the rest."

Mr Read is several-sided. In a few sentences, and always as if an alien from an earlier epoch had strayed into the book, he is an old-fashioned teacher of rhetoric, as when he tells us that the first words of an essay "should be either familiar or arresting, and the last should be emphatic." Seldom, far too seldom—not being in this book "concerned with the criticism of literature"—he permits himself to criticize, and whenever he does so one wishes he would do it oftener. Nobody has done, for example, in a few lines more damaging justice to Walter Pater. Nobody else has traced so analytically to its causes Mr T. S. Eliot's eminence as a writer of critical prose. And when Mr Read says that the "meaning" which Henry James most cared to express "was concerned with life at its finest creative point—the point where moral judg-

ments are formed," he gives us, unless we accept his assertion too glibly, something to think about.

Mr Read is least satisfactory where I suppose him to have been most interested and to have tried hardest, namely as a theorist. He is haunted by a distinction between poetry and prose—"the real distinction," he calls it—which is anything but clear: "Poetry is creative expression: Prose is constructive expression." He repeats this in many forms without persuading me that such a distinction will work. If this "real distinction" would have us call *To the Lighthouse* "constructive expression" and *The Rape of the Lock* "creative expression," it will—as Mr Read says of "the common definition of the paragraph"—"be found of very little application to" what we actually "find in literature." No, the only working distinction between poetry and prose is, among other men's, Wordsworth's, whom I quote without his qualifying words: "The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre." A prose writer is never afraid of writing poetry. But he has often to be on his guard against metre. He achieves some of his most interesting sentence structures merely by trying to silence the metre he notices in what he has written. By always varying the number of unstressed syllables between our stressed syllables, by declining to repeat any one arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables so near the place of its last occurrence that we notice the repetition, so, and only so, can we be certain that what we are writing is prose. No other distinction between prose and poetry—except possibly this, that although poetry is not poetry unless it is good, prose no matter how bad is still prose unless it is metre—is of the slightest use to a writer when he is writing.

A brave, rather confused theorist, an admirable literary critic, Mr Read is also an anthologist, and a very good one. How can anybody so young—he is young enough to think Miss Austen's style "recondite" and "quaint"—have had time to read so widely? If we confine ourselves to the quotations he makes—varied and long enough to show us how excellent English prose can be when it is homely, or exquisite, or exactly severe, when here it flows without any impediment, or is all glorious there with imagination—we cannot help wishing that Mr Read would create or construct an anthology. It would be, I am sure, such a book of prose as we should all carry about with us.

PHILIP LITTELL.

MODERN ART

THE chief question on my mind when sailing for France last summer was that of Miro. Was he worth bothering about? No other name, during the winter, had come across the seas with such insistence, and nothing came across with the name—no pictures. If he really were worth bothering about it would be necessary, it seemed, to make another of those fatiguing trips to Paris in order to do it there. A traversée "was clearly indicated," as the fortune-tellers say, and so, being essentially dutiful, I went.

I did not meet the young man though. M Miro had himself felt the inclination to travel and had hied himself to his native Spain. I very seldom meet the artists. I prefer not to. They sometimes are so personally fascinating that they prejudice you in favour of their works and that complicates things. Two of M Miro's works, on the other hand prejudiced me in favour of *him*. No matter what he might be like—and I heard he was odd—the two pictures had answered my question and I knew that the artist was worthy of bother. They were at the new gallery, Pierre's, on the rue de Seine. They were not for sale. (Instantly I had decided that either or both pictures would do admirably for the New York Luxembourg, a mythical institution for which, in my mind's eye, I am always making purchases.) But they were not for sale. They were to adorn M Pierre's private collection, or the artist's own private collection, I forget which. That is the latest thing in Paris! The dealers have become collectors. All the desirable objects of art are not for sale. It is certainly the case, and with a vengeance, at M Paul Guillaume's. M Guillaume looks positively offended if you ask a price. It almost seems to be superfluous, under the new system, to have a gallery. I have a vague notion, for instance, that there were pictures at M Paul Guillaume's gallery on the rue de la Boétie but recollect perfectly all the masterpieces of the private collection and can even tell you their positions on the walls if you insist upon it. I remember *them* very precisely. One of the members of New York's advance-guard was calling upon Guillaume while I was there, and agreed with me in thinking the collection excellently representative of the push and urge of



PAUL GUILLAUME. BY AMADEO MODIGLIANI

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current feeling and that it would be a handsome act upon the part of somebody to acquire the whole thing for New York. When one or other of us voiced this opinion to M Guillaume he smiled at us incredulously and unhumorously. The pictures, it seemed, were not for sale. Nevertheless some people do seem to know how to get things away from French dealers, even under the new system. I myself have great faith in the efficacy of prayer. I pray, for instance, for the two big Miro's to come to the Gallery of Living Art, or at least to some New York collection, and preferably a public one. For the three big Miro's, I should say, for there is another one, *The Dog Barking at the Moon*, which I have only seen in photo but which I am now persuaded is also swell. Before going down the crooked little rue de Seine to Pierre's I asked one of the younger French modernists of my acquaintance if he agreed that Miro were great and I got a dubious and unconvinced shrug of the shoulders by way of reply. After a moment of reflection, however, my friend twinkled his eyes and said, "Well, I must admit that there is something great about that *Dog Barking at the Moon*."

M Pierre, when showing me a big Miro canvas which divided itself practically into two bold tones of red and was called *A Landscape*, said—seeing that I was impressed and would probably stand for it—"It has the feeling of Rousseau's *Egyptienne*." I did stand for it. I really thought so too. This landscape has the same mysterious spooky quality that made the Henri Rousseau evocation so thrilling. Later I was shown another large canvas that had been touched in with the same spectral brushes. There was something that looked like a dog, too, in this composition and that helped me to realize how effective the *Dog Barking at the Moon* must be. "Very like a whale," I suppose you'll be saying if you are sceptical of all this. M Miro, in truth, does very little for the dog that appears so frequently to him in dreams. The new art, you understand, is simple. It is almost like a Caran d'Ache dog, or like one of those stylized toy animals that advanced parents now give to their children. But all the same, the symbol has the power of something genuinely imagined and is painted as though to the order of Don Quixote himself. Accepting definitely three such pictures as these mentioned is something, and so I now feel committed to M Miro,

Another allegiance I am about to strike, I think, is with M Le Corbusier, the architect, whose house at Garches, for the Michael Stein family will affect all my ideas for houses henceforth. There are lots of things about it that I question, and which I will question if I ever meet M Le Corbusier—he too is one of the artists a critic can meet—but a first glance at the mansion is sufficient to give an impression of something that has come to stay and that is widely to be imitated. A lady I met at the salon of decorative arts came up to me with a beaming face, saying, "You don't have to argue with me about this," waving a hand vaguely at the Ruhlmann furniture and the Bourgeois interiors, "I may not understand it, but I love it." I feel the same way about the Stein house. It looks, it is true, like a refined factory, with its sheets of windows running in horizontal bands across the façade, but there is something about it so persuasively neat and fitted for use that all the older houses in the neighbourhood suddenly look composed of nine-tenths fol-de-rol.

HENRY MCBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

WE FOUND ourselves looking forward to this new season with quickened expectations; for we were convinced that orchestral or operatic music is the flowering of the metropolis, the defence of concentration in both wealth (the patron) and specialized endeavour (the artist). We had proposed to make up for insufficiencies of knowledge and power by zeal in praising. With the first admonitory unison of the Coriolanus overture under Mengelberg's baton, we would vote the season solemnly inaugurated.

In dark and fetid places, there are the gnarled in body and mangled in mind. But the concert hall shall be the denial of these vices, shall prove that this same state of affairs has its pride and asseveration. Music, we had decided, would be the song above catastrophe—something like the court of a great Lewis before the patter of rain has become the trampling of many feet. How long could it last? No answer! Perhaps it would grow firmer, and spread even to those dark and fetid regions. The vast enterprise of music. That art which has charms to make the soothed breast savage, and which tends as naturally towards the grandiloquent as literature tends towards laundry lists.

There are, in many different-priced cafés, groups who hold to the ineffectualness of art. Through asking too long that art cure toothache, they have come to believe in the superiority of dentists. I also know a man who, on having written a bad book review, was convinced that all criticism is absurd. But before psychology is finished, I know that it will prove by measurement the great utility, not only of the people's art, but also of art in its most remote and difficult phases. Surely it is a fact in nature that we can maintain a certain level only by going constantly beyond it. It is because some men are metaphysicians that others are able to write their names. A complex social organization is maintained by a state of mind, and that state of mind is constructed out of art. Artists, even though their biographies are carefully recorded in history, are nameless in their effects. Perceiving their influence only at those rare times when they have written political or theo-

logical polemic, many hastily conclude that art must specifically tackle contemporary problems. That a Shaw or a Wells is superior to a Baudelaire. Yet Shaw and Wells are only possible as the vulgarization of subtler Shaws and Wellses. They are not sources. Baudelaire is a source.

So much as sociological preface to our present season. The words are meant to explain why one might dare look upon these closet battlefields with the desire to learn. In the aesthetic as a category, there is implicit a wholesome scepticism towards the practical. Not the least service of art lies in its ability to make action more difficult. And one particular brand of art may, by its specific message, still further strengthen this questioning attitude. What, it may be asked, was ever discovered without certainty of the most rabid and unbalanced sort? And what, it may be answered, was ever preserved without the agency of sleepless distrust?

We were, then, eager for the season to begin. Fiddlers, blowers of horns, conductor, even the audience, were weighted with much symbolic meaning. We boarded the train of a Thursday, resolved that the opening unison of the *Coriolanus* overture, under Mengelberg's baton, would solemnly inaugurate the season.

It did not. We found ourselves wondering whether the opening unison of the Schumann symphony, as led by Monteux, would have served the purpose better. And as the *Coriolanus* lacked the note of admonition which we had expected, and had gained freshness neither through an unsymphonic summer nor through the insight of the conductor, so the Mozart *Divertimento* which followed it showed no excessive diligence, was not searching in its delicacy. Perhaps there was more Mozart in the main theme of Strauss's *Eulenspiegel*, for Mengelberg apparently interprets this element of music best when it arises out of something else: not when he is in it, but when he suddenly comes upon it. And the Schubert symphony in C-major, which we have been told need not seem long, seemed long. We left the concert hall as one rebuked.

In Mengelberg's next concert, he gave the Tchaikovsky Fourth Symphony, the ideological parallel to Beethoven's Fifth. I have long been humbled by my inability to get any sustained sense of fate out of either. But I am emboldened a little on recalling that

musicians construct their literal programmes somewhat in this wise: "The first movement shows the march of doom and man's dread in his contemplation of it. The second conveys his personal broodings over the bondage of human destiny. In the third we have a light dance episode, a gay and coquettish . . . et cetera." In other words, there is no symphonic music in which purely technical considerations do not constantly tend to blot out the primary message. And as auditors we may consider such programmes to be hardly more than suggestions for playing, instructions more comprehensive than "adagio" or "pizzicato," but of the same order. Accordingly, we may listen, not in awe, but as sybarites, recognizing that there are certain blares like challenges, but being more affected when, in the descending runs, intricately repeated, there is the lure of texture.¹ . . . This symphony had been preceded by Emerson Whithorne's *Fata Morgana*, such music as should be heard behind a tent, since it could not, without such placing, provide its own mystery.

Our third concert, under the direction of Walter Damrosch, contained a "Five Cities Program." We should willingly have sacrificed the geographical diversity to hear more of the Vaughan Williams London Symphony than the cunning scheme allowed room for. The quiet gloom of the two movements given, seemed so much more careful than the similar moods of Respighi's *Fountains of Rome* which followed. Both Rome and London, we learn, have pensive clocks, which chime softly against a symphonic night-fall, and with each stroke envelop us in a deeper and graver darkness. But not so New York, claims Mr Carpenter in his *Sky-*

¹ Recently, having occasion to examine a Shakespearean concordance, I noted in particular the hundreds of passages in which the word "hour" occurs. I was impressed to observe that in all but a very few instances, the word had the same connotations, being used in contexts which suggested the ominous or threatening. Such examination of key words might, I thought in passing, be a way of settling questions of disputed authorship. For I also recalled that some analyst of Wagner had found identical combinations of notes used for identical purposes, though these notes sometimes appeared consecutively as melody and at other times simultaneously as harmony. Perhaps all great artists whose work is pronouncedly a matter of their medium will display such self-consistency in the use of symbols. The audience, however, parallels the artist's system but approximately. They find "beauty" in the region between alienation and identity with the artist's symbols.

scrapers. These skyscrapers, indeed, are in the very process of construction—as the composer shows in bustling, somewhat noisy rhythms, with bits of melody as catchy as slogans. Thus, the vivaciousness and inconveniences of the city are also those of the music. The Charpentier Paris (Aria from Louise) is Murger. The closing Strauss waltz (for Vienna) was a reminder which we did not need.

The Beethoven Symphony Orchestra, for all its serious handicaps, is evidently to provide New York with much spirited music. Perhaps considering the strategic importance of his first concert, Mr Georges Zaslowsky had schooled his orchestra to more than responsiveness, to positive obedience. The exceptional variety of the Elgar "Enigma" Variations was earnestly recorded. The fourth Brahms symphony, particularly in the first two movements, seemed inadequate. The andante of this work, in which the wind instruments figure with such prominence, can be given in such a way that each transfer of leadership from one timbre to another seems like a deliberate move, like a discovery in the handing on of the theme. The Nordic Symphony by Howard Hanson, which had its New York première at this performance, contained the rugged honesty proper to a nordic symphony, with perhaps more berserker rage than even this subject demanded. . . . The programme ended with Petrouschka, which one may now hear as a child, so that we ventured particularly to enjoy the progress of the bear.

KENNETH BURKE

THE THEATRE

THERE are always two possible reasons for finding a theatrical season, or any part of it, uninteresting. One, the productions; two, the observer. I confess in the first instance, therefore, that I haven't, in the past month, been under any great temptation to go to the theatre, expected little, and found it. On the other hand, I found this, in Mr St John Ervine's review of **HOLD EVERYTHING**:

"There was a puerile joke in the play about the Prince of Wales's falling off horses. It was invented, I imagine, by some one who probably could not get onto a horse. If the 'humorists' who make this 'joke' about once in every ten minutes had a tenth of the Prince's pluck they would be entitled to be as funny as that."

I do not understand the last sentence, but I get the idea; so the month has not been a total loss.

Another newspaper event has been the discovery that Goethe is dull. The Theatre Guild produced *FAUST* and got a bad press, but some of the critics blamed the Guild for the version of the play it chose and some decided that Goethe is one of the over-rated stuffed-shirts of literature. My only interest is in finding out whether this is one of the Guild's honourable failures or merely an attempt to put over a successful show which failed. "The Guild," says a recent official announcement, "has always endeavored to produce plays of the kind which could not ordinarily be produced in the commercial theatre." This cannot mean that none of the Guild's productions could not: Shaw (except *Methuselah*), Molnar, Sidney Howard, are far too skilful and practical playwrights to require special production and special audiences. And the rare Guild failures financially have seemed to me (again with exceptions) ill chosen and not particularly happy in production; some of the failures at the Provincetown and under Mr Hopkins seem to me to have more *panache* than the Guild's successes, and although the Guild can hardly have any resounding failures now, when it

has trained and reared a faithful and intelligent audience, for itself and for others, it ought to be proud of its comparative failures, from time to time, and not regret them. To produce plays destined to failure is a silly business which the Guild has wisely avoided; but to produce great plays, even at the risk of failure, remains the mark of a true lover of the theatre.

Molnar's *OLYMPIA* got a tepid press, Mr Ervine wondering how the author of *LILIOM* (which, he informed us, failed nearly every where except in New York, so I trust the Guild will omit that name from its list of honourable productions right away) got his reputation, especially as from his plays one suspects that the author had never met a man or woman of fine sensibilities. The dramatic turn upon which Molnar depends so much is not so good in *OLYMPIA* as in some of the other plays: the resurrection of *Liliom*, the actual appearance of the phantom rival in *THE TALE OF THE WOLF*, and the supremely skilful second act curtains in *THE PLAY'S THE THING* are expedients of the first order of dramaturgy—of the science of projecting an idea by dramatic methods. In *OLYMPIA*, a princess, deeply in love with a commoner, is bidden dismiss him and told to do it so that it kills without leaving the victim to suffer. She takes the obvious means of humiliating him for his impudent aspirations and in the turmoil of her own love, her language becomes hysterical and low. He goes; and presently the princess and her mother receive a visit from the local police informing them that the commoner is not the captain of hussars he pretends to be, but a notorious swindler. (You must remember, to understand what follows, that all this takes place in the shadow of the frigid court of Vienna, before the war.) To avoid scandal, it is necessary that the swindler be recalled and bribed. Obviously, the only bribe he will take is the Princess. He is, with the connivance of the mother and the eagerness of the Princess, bribed.

That constitutes the first turn. The second is the unblushing return of the scalawag, announcing (with proof) that he is, indeed, a captain of hussars, and that he made up the whole story by which the head of the police was hoodwinked into assisting his rather cheap game. And then, having wrung from the Princess a declaration of love, he announces that she will never see him again. It is pretty thin going at the end.

The absurdity of the play was not well handled by the producer and director. As it stood, it ranged over most of the dramatic fields, rather like the catalogue of Polonius; there was no musical key to which all the parts were related. The players had time and scope enough to be sometimes good, sometimes bad; but lacked superior direction to be consistent. Miss Crews and Mr Korff played farce and comedy, respectively, most of the time; but the passagework between moods was bad.

Two musicals. **HOLD EVERYTHING** uses this year's favourite plot about the pugilist and, I read in the papers, "kids it." If that is kidding, give me straight serious discussion of the morals of game-fixing. The portions of the entertainment devoted to the plot developed such a sentimentality about sporting events as to call for Mr John Tunis's immediate debunking. But the other parts, barring the music, were excellent. Especially the dancing which is active, varied, fresh, and entertaining. The humour is in the hands of Victor Moore, the hesitant, round-faced, gentle pudgy fellow who has been creating the same character for many seasons, always with a definitely ingratiating simplicity, and in those of Bert Lahr, an old vaudeville favourite who knocked 'em cold. His method is that of a grotesque and his good moments are so good that the bad ones, the over-acting, the terribly obvious mechanism of some of his fun, is passed over. Mr Lahr abandons himself to fun, with distorted grimaces, alarming changes of tone, and strange loss of control of his muscles. The last touch which makes a comic genius, he lacks.

THREE CHEERS, in music, plot, dances, and most of the fun takes you back to the Follies of 1910 (unless that happened to be an exceptionally good vintage). Then out steps Will Rogers and reads from his part the description of the acrobatic stunts Mr Fred Stone would have done had he not been prevented by an accident from appearing. And Mr Rogers goes in to his own routine, more amusing it seemed to me than it has been for several seasons. Perhaps the political campaign inspires Mr Rogers; the shafts of his wit speed brightly; even when he laboriously tries to even the balance by making one or two jokes against the Democrats, he is good; and when his heart is in it, as in his discussions of prohibition, he is at his best.

Among other events in the theatre is the closing of *PLEASURE MAN*, Miss Mae West's little play about female impersonators, introverts, and high morals. The resemblance of this play to *THE DRAG*, which never was allowed to come to New York, is marked; and the prosecution was inevitable. It is a pity that the question of censorship, which is serious, should be brought up in connexion with a play which is not. A particularly detailed and sympathetic report of the play made to me by an admirer of the author, leaves me wondering about the technical justification of its suppression. And convinced that the general problem needs to be re-studied, with considerable attention to the psychology of crowds and very little to Miss West.

GILBERT SELDES

BRIEFER MENTION

THE HOUSE WITH THE ECHO, by T. F. Powys (16mo, 235 pages; Viking Press: \$2). One hazards the guess that Mr Powys' favourite form of biography is the epitaph. The brevity of it must be grateful to him—and the finality. And the grim humour—not always unconscious—which finds expression on headstones must delight him. Certainly these brief tales by him partake of the same attributes, and it is not by mere chance that so many of them are concerned with burial rites and the sudden tragedies of mortality. Glowingly he writes of Tadnol Churchyard—"Nowhere else the air blew so feelingly, and no tree's shade in summer was so heavy with love as the great yew's, and no moss flowered so finely in February as the moss that grew upon the churchyard wall." There are more than a score of lean and sinewy stories in this volume—the harvest of an eloquent economy.

THE RING FENCE, by Eden Phillpotts (12mo, 388 pages; Macmillan: \$2) is another of those plodding, close-to-the-soil romances which Mr Phillpotts yields annually with the fruitful regularity of a well-tended orchard. As usual, the conflict is worked out in terms of land and love, with the latter winning out by a comfortable margin in the end. The story is sprayed with the rustic philosophy which Mr Phillpotts has found so successful in counteracting the blight of monotony. This author's short excursions in fiction do not differ greatly from his long journeys, and **IT HAPPENED LIKE THAT**, a collection of fifteen tales (12mo, 287 pages; Macmillan: \$2.25) discloses no startling innovations—either in materials or method.

GEORGIAN STORIES 1927, edited by Arthur Waugh (10mo, 359 pages; Putnam: \$2.50). With one or two exceptions, the English writers represented here have recognized and happily fulfilled their obligation to draw real characters. One of the exceptions is Jean Devanny, whose "lissom" lady and "big man" seem to have strayed from the realm of cis-Atlantic *snappy* fiction, and another is William Gerhardi, whose Philadelphian quaintly ejaculates "Blast the whole bally crew of them!" To offset these discords, there are admirable contributions by Storm Jameson, A. E. Coppard, J. D. Beresford, and half a dozen others. And not one "big business" plot in the entire collection! The same emphasis on people rather than on story mechanics is discoverable in **THE BEST BRITISH SHORT STORIES OF 1927**, edited by Edward J. O'Brien (12mo, 400 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$2.50). As Mr O'Brien points out, the younger English writers at any rate "seem unwilling to permit machinery to uproot them from their tradition"—an auspicious omen for the future of their art. More than a score of characteristic examples are reprinted here, three of which—Daniel Corkery's *The Emptied Sack*, Seán O'Faoláin's *The Bomb-Shop*, and Lennox Robinson's *The Quest*—are already known to readers of **THE DIAL**.

TRIFORIUM, by Sherard Vines (12mo, 86 pages; Cobden-Sanderson, London: 5/-) rides the waves of poetry aloofly, like a private yacht—trim and gleaming and polished, and ballasted fore and aft by synoptical notes. Here is a "sea-going pavilion," a craft "gilded and bristling with crocketed barbs," dipping and gliding to the rhythm of curious words—borborygms, nenuphars, symplegad, gambadoes. Snow becomes "that elegant pulvillio" and Fate is "bitter-sad as juice from plump wild pompions." Mr Vines is in revolt against "cosy, home-made art"—the poetic bankruptcy which "produces yet again the foxglove in the hedge or the gypsy on the heath." He composes with a controlled extravagance, flashing imagery, subtle irony. Every page is a challenge to the mind—and an invitation to the dictionary.

BURNING BUSH, by Louis Untermeyer (10mo, 109 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2) is not the crackling of thorns; rather it evokes the nostalgic fragrance of autumn leaves. The poet seems to be in a subdued and questioning mood. "The world has lost its edges" and "Even the heavens waver." Yet from the haze of experience he still weaves glowing patterns, firm in texture and satisfying in their clarity. And he still dives—with delectable ease—into the deep pools of irony.

THE TURQUOISE TRAIL, An Anthology of New Mexico Poetry, compiled by Alice Corbin Henderson (12mo, 172 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$2.25). The old Spanish province of *Nuevo Mexico*, once a fragment of the Spanish empire in the New World, still retains—as the compiler of this anthology suggests—a "distinct regional personality," a quality which is felt by poets as dissimilar as John Galsworthy and Alfred Kreymborg, or Willa Cather and Carl Sandburg. There is a sense of space and of primal force in these "mountains blanket-wrapped round a white hearth of desert" and on these "high stretched mesas" which vibrates the imagination and challenges the poet. Almost two score of them are represented in this collection.

AD PERENNIS VITAE FONTEM, Poems by John Lyle Donaghy (10mo, 32 pages; Minorca Press, Dublin: price not given) is a slender collection of verse, composed with such seeming simplicity of texture that one is surprised not to discern their underlying thought at once. Without question the creative impulse is here, but its substance remains evasive—"dreamily, hazily, foliated around." One looks eagerly for something to which the poet himself has given voice—"a ray the more in one place, a just perceptible brightening"—but the mists are reluctant to lift. Perhaps it is the will of the poet that they remain.

THE MYSTERIOUSNESS OF MARRIAGE, by Jeremy Taylor, with illustrations from drawings by Denis Tegetmeier (12mo, 55 pages; Francis Walterston, Abergavenny, South Wales: 7/6). That such goodly authorship and beautiful book-making should be defaced with comic illustrations is confusing. The contrast, in this instance, of practice with preaching scarcely seems "salutary"—unbecoming though it is for a dial to discourage interest in contemporary virtuosity or in drawings so able as those which Mr Walterston has taken the trouble to procure.

AESTHETICS OF THE NOVEL, by Van Meter Ames (12mo, 210 pages; University of Chicago Press: \$2.50). Mr Ames sees art as a problem expressed in terms of value, and value as the projection of a need. The aesthetic attitude he defines as that which is situated where habit has been arrested by a problematic situation in a moment of pure contemplation before reflection demands a solution. One might wish in this author's own literary method of expression a little more proof of that artistic felicity which it is his avowed purpose to investigate.

CONTEMPORARY BRITISH LITERATURE, by John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert (12mo, 196 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$1.50). This manual for the student of current tendencies in literature, with its biographical data, bibliographies, study outlines, selected reviews, and suggestions for reading, is valuable in itself, and not less so as a demonstration in method. One can understand how not all British authors and not "even the most important notices of individual books" could be included, for "among the scores of striking successes it is hard to find a dozen, much less a score, of authors who have anything of permanent value to contribute to literature, and of these the greater part are not the best known." It is not at once apparent to one, however, why there should not be mention of Gordon Craig, Charles Whibley, George Saintsbury, John Eglington, Llewelyn Powys, Percy Lubbock, Logan Pearsall Smith, or Roger Fry.

A LECTURE ON LECTURES, by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (12mo, 60 pages; Hogarth Lectures, No. 1, Harcourt, Brace: \$1) is chiefly an examination of the oral discourse as an integral part of the English university system. Being himself an active principle in that system, he is neither unmindful of its handicaps nor unappreciative of its merits. Quite naturally, he aligns himself with the defenders—a gracious and a persuasive advocate. Concerning lectures in general, he holds it unwise "to reprobate a human function or a form of public enjoyment which, for reasons however obscure, apparently ministers, without bloodshed or cruelty, to some natural instinct."

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH BIOGRAPHY, by Harold Nicolson (12mo, 158 pages; Hogarth Lectures, No. 4, Harcourt, Brace: \$1.25). Mr Nicolson here sketches competently and matter-of-factly the course of English biography from Bishop Asser's life of King Alfred to Lytton Strachey's Queen Victoria, and indicates his professional views as to the future of the art. On the whole he finds that though several developments were authentic as far as they went, they were discontinuous, perhaps even abortive, and that what he terms "pure biography"—"the lives of individual men considered as a branch of literature"—cannot be produced again, since, as he considers, our immense modern interest in biography is not literary. It is a defended and doubtless a defensible thesis. Yet the critic would seem to be taking much upon himself who suggests that the Boswells and Lockharts are less possible now than when they appeared—their apparition being in times when the general interest in biography was far more restrictive than now, and practitioners a good deal less informed in varieties of significant knowledge and technique.

POSSIBLE WORLDS AND OTHER PAPERS, by J. B. S. Haldane (10mo, 305 pages; Harpers: \$2.50). Nietzsche saw in the pretensions of science but a new set of dogmas to replace the old dogmas of religion. But if we must in our uncreditable ignorance be ruled by dogmas it is reassuring to know that men of Mr Haldane's reasonableness and liberality are the ones to issue the mysterious mandates. The subject-matter in this present collection of essays is extremely varied and ranges from vitamins and blood transfusion to the future of biology and the destiny of man.

THE NEW RUSSIA, by Dorothy Thompson (8vo, 330 pages; Holt: \$3) is a temperate and an intelligent report, set down with an accompaniment neither of head-shaking nor of banner-waving. What the author has seen she has recorded, and her modest disclaimer of omniscience fortifies—rather than weakens—the soundness of her conclusions. Of especial interest are the chapters dealing with the status of women under the Soviet government, for here the experiment is most radical and most precarious. It is a relief to find a book about Russia which the reader can follow without being dragged through statistical brambles or plunged into a morass of doctrine.

ESSAYS OF TODAY, 1926-1927, edited by Odell Shepard and Robert Hillyer (8vo, 392 pages; Century: \$2.25). The twenty-nine magazine essays reprinted here are of several sorts. The five concluding pieces are biographical sketches of various degrees of dignity and vigour, such as R. M. Lovett's of Charles W. Eliot, Tucker Brooke's of Queen Elizabeth, and R. F. Dibble's of Mary Moody Emerson. Against these might be set the lyricism of Waldo Frank's *The Art of the Bull Fight* and the aesthetic *un-illusionment* of Thomas Craven's *The Great American Art* (of the moving pictures) both reprinted from *THE DIAL*. Among the inevitable re-stirrings of educational matters, Hanford Henderson's essay *Concerning Endowments*, from *The North American Review*, is substantial and very pertinent. The bulk of the collection, however, is given to what the editors term social criticism—friendly examinations of the American *mores*. Among these efforts, which vary much in quality, Albert Jay Nock's *Decline of Conversation*, from Harpers, ought to be mentioned for its urbanity and pith. The collection as a whole is of considerable interest.

SPOKESMEN: Modern Writers and American Life, by T. K. Whipple (10mo, 276 pages; Appleton: \$2.50) is more noteworthy in its specific reasoning than in its general standpoint. It is, in fact, frankly derivative and continuative in point of view from bases already established by such other critics as Van Wyck Brooks and Lewis Mumford. The immediate thesis, illustrated by critical consideration of ten such Americans as Henry Adams, Theodore Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, and Eugene O'Neill, is that the inner life, which is defined as a life of disinterested realization rather than of interested action, has been stunted in America, if not actually deformed, by the hostility of *milieu* engendered by our universal worship of success. If this is not a vividly novel doctrine it is yet made specifically and interestingly relevant to the ten cases cited. The essays on Dreiser and O'Neill seem particularly well considered.

COMMENT

THERE will always be some who are in a hurry, and pleased to be shot from ship to land in an airplane so as to arrive in advance of the usual time. Equipment, however, material or academic, is not invariably a part of culture as Mr Douglas Kennedy reminded those who saw the exhibition of English folk dancing at The Art Center last autumn. We have long been familiar with the valuable unimitativeness of folklore—the green men, dogs, horses, and other sincere impossibilities in varying guises which appear in sagas and ballads the world over—the sister that as “a machrel of the sea,” every Saturday at noon, combs the hair of her brother, the Worm; and newest perhaps in the Danish version¹ the lover to be disenchanted by voluntary ordeal:

“You’ve plighted your word, and now be true,
Give hither your hand, my claw take you.”

The lady she gave the bird her hand,
And free from feathers she saw him stand.

W. P. Kerr noted that “strange excellence in the ballads,” “not merely of repeating old motives, but of turning the substance of daily life into poetry.” Folk dancing at any rate is a natural means of expression like language and presents itself as an antidote to shyness and those insidiously anti-social forms of considerateness which tend to impair innocence without conferring security. It is the aim of The English Folk Dance Society not so much to provide entertainment for the onlooker as to afford people means of entertaining themselves. Though no dancing could be more delightful to watch than that of Mr Kennedy and his group. The spiral swirled attitudes as in certain kinds of ships’ figure-head, the “speed and neatness,” the “flashes of wit cropping up in the movements,” were shapely and gracious, the terminal and divisional pauses seeming more deferentially courteous even than those of the minuet. The Morris dancing in its rhythmic complexity and

¹ Folklore in the English and Scottish Ballads. By Lowry Charles Wimberly. 8vo. 466 pages. University of Chicago Press. \$5.

patter-step, achieved an effect of mastery the more remarkable that the dancers were not a full complement, and suffered nothing apparently in the absence of box hats, wreaths, fluttering streamers, Tom-fool and She-male (a man dressed as a woman) as supplementary coquillage. It was obvious that Morris and Sword dances are not "for as many as will," but for men, and for those that can do them; the Fool's Dance by Mr Kennedy alone was a particularly wise and unfatigued little whirligig of ability.

There is power in mystery and it is not disappointing not to know the origin of the Morris Dance or the significance of the handkerchief in either hand and to be aware merely that a good dancer should, as the Morris men said, feel the weight of his handkerchiefs. The "purpose" of wands, bells, blue and cerise ribbons tying the bells to the legs, and of miniature music, needs no explanation. Ensnared by the fineness of the airs and steps, one desires that it all be repeated and in certain places in England teams may be seen once a year on a particular day, "about tea-time" as Mr Kennedy suggests, since indigenous and rightful folk dancers appear *on* the day, not having engaged in self-distrustful preliminary practice.

Partly as novelty but also in itself, the drum and tabor (tabber) accompaniment perfected the grace of the scene and satisfies Henry Peacham's contention in *The Compleat Gentleman* that the musician is a second physician; that his art is a thing which "prolonge l'existence, guérit certaines maladies, rend inoffensive la pique de la tarentule, corrige les défauts de prononciation et remédie au bégaiement chez les enfants."

To see fortunately and delicately executed movements is as true an introduction to the skill of music as one could have. Lost words and airs rediscovered by Cecil Sharp in the Appalachian mountain region repaid him for many endurances and are important for speed-ridden and to some extent coreless modern expertness, reaffirming our belief that delightful manners, conversation, and culture, can exist devoid of opportunity and advantages.

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